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Stroker Creative Visuals

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Abstract

This project proposes a business plan for a creative performance production company for live and recorded music. Its main focus is on music video and live performance productions for artists and record labels. The company would be involved in the creative production (as well as project management) and would be hiring creative professionals as agency staff to link to each project.

Key Words

Music videos, creative performance, choreography, dancers, Stroker Creative Visuals, music industry.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Music and dance have always been connected in some type of way or form, across all different types of cultures around the world. Both are creative forms that allow people to express themselves and share stories in different manners. And as stated in Leman and Maes's 'The Role of Embodiment in the Perception of Music' paper, (2014, p. 237), "once we accept the idea of a close link between sound and gesture (...), we are committed to the fact that the influence of music perception on human action also works the other way around, namely, that music-driven gesturing may facilitate musical perception". This implies that incorporating movement into a music video or performance can actually be beneficial to an artist's career as it enhances a viewer's experience, generating further engagement. While musicians and singers do not necessarily require dancers in order to share their music with an audience, dancers do depend on music for their creative performances and interpretation of songs.

In this thesis, the role and impact of the music video in today's day and age will be analysed, gradually migrating from its first appearance on television to online platforms such as YouTube. At the same time, people's music consumption patterns will be discussed, along with the importance of having live dance entertainment on stage alongside the artist during concerts, festivals and tours.

The author's passion for music and dance has led her to come up with a business plan for a creative performance company, where artists and other clients can request different services which may include music video filming and editing, creative concept creation, idea development, choreography plus dancers, exclusive filming locations and live performance creation, just to name a few. The company's core strengths consist of supplying the client with the creative idea and overall storyline creation - or acting as an advisor to the client, and mainly managing and supervising the whole process – and, ultimately, of facilitating its connections to other professionals in the creative field. So, instead of clients having to shop around to find a film crew, a location, dancers, a choreographer, a director, or any other requirements, they can simply make use of the company's services and locate everything in one place, letting the company do all the networking and connecting work through their database of creative professionals (acting as an agency, carrying out project-based work).

2. BUSINESS PLAN

2.1. Element 1: The company and its operation plans

2.1.1. What the company is about

Stroker Creative Visuals (or SCV) offers multiple services, however, with the emphasis on creative performance production for live and recorded music (in the form of a choreographed music video or an on-stage performance production) by connecting the various elements such as dancers, choreographers, film crew, director, video editor and location. Other additional services can include photo shoots for artist promotion and branding, extras, models and actors/actresses to include in the music video, make-up and hair artists, stylists and influencers (as a future option). Alternatively, clients can also request concept videos or commercials that do not necessarily include choreography and/or dancers, but this will not be the main focus. Artists or record labels (or other companies) will be able to approach the company with an original song (or a song to which they have obtained the rights) and request a music video or live performance creation, with the help of the company's creative production and its links to other industry professionals.

2.1.2. Where the company is based

Initially, the company will be based online only, in order to keep costs as low as possible. There is an official website, illustrating the services offered by the company, providing examples of projects completed, and displaying the roster of artistic professionals as well as examples of shoot locations. To keep costs down while still adding that touch of professionalism, flexible work space will be rented occasionally in London for core staff members to work and to receive clients for meetings and appointments. A hot desk for 30 hours per month on Tottenham Court Road would cost £145 per month, and would include 24/7 access, fibre Internet and a free private meeting room where client appointments could be held. This package would allow the company to pick and choose the hours spent in the flexible work space receiving clients and those spent working from home or in a café. (Rentadesk, 2019)

2.1.3. Why the company was created

It is no secret that creative professionals need various income streams within their industry in order to make a living. The company aims to provide an open platform where creative professionals can come together and collaborate on creative performance projects to bring new creative ideas to life.

The importance of the live music industry (and therefore potentially live performance) has been growing ever since CD sales have decreased and online music consumption has increased. Artists now earn most of their income from performing live during concerts, and from other related sales such as merchandising. People are investing their money in concert tickets because they are looking to “consume” experiences, to feel a closer connection to the artist and to engage in a social activity. During these concerts, artists are increasingly incorporating visuals and live performances with other creatives, as well as improving audio quality. (Holt, 2012)

The company will connect these people and create effective work relationships by acting as an agency, linking different professionals in collaborative projects, who might otherwise not have met without the mediation of the company. As a company, we believe it is important to offer a central location where clients can request a creative performance project, and to act as a one-stop-shop (be that for live or recorded music) where every aspect of the project will be taken care of. This way, the client is no longer weighed down by the pressure of finding the professionals (dancers, film crew, location, etc.) best suited to his situation, which will speed up the process and give him more time to focus on things such as campaigns and recording sessions. After carrying out some research, no completely similar companies have been found in the UK, only companies offering just one or a few of the services offered by this company, meaning that the client would still need to go out and search for additional services to complete the project. The most similar company encountered was Blackstar London, which will be discussed later on in the competitor analysis.

Ultimately, the unique selling point (USP) is the one-stop-shop business model and their social advocacy, promoting and supporting diversity, body acceptance and mental health awareness, by aiming to include dancers and choreographers without requiring a specific height/weight/ethnicity/appearance. Stroker Creative Visuals wants to give all professionals an equal chance, welcoming people from any background and social class, breaking with society's standards of what a singer, dancer, model or person in general should look like while on camera. The concept of mental health is really important to our company, especially in the creative industry, not enough people and companies are talking about this topic and SCV wants to shed light on these different topics to raise awareness.

Websites like mandy.com, starnow.com and Facebook page “The Hustle” are what make it possible for people to find connections (which are the companies/websites that are the most similar to Stroker Creative Visuals, apart from Blackstar London), but there is not one specific company yet that specifically deals with choreographed music videos and all the related elements for the finished product (according to the author's research for London), which is

why Stroker Creative Visuals has been created, there is a potential market for it. As M. Fox (2004) stated in his 'E-commerce Business Models for the Music Industry' paper, "any new business model must also take into account the fact that the Internet may potentially provide an entertainment experience over and above listening of the music itself", which is why the company is focusing so much on making the visuals for an artist's song possible, since people are demanding more online visual content.

One of the reasons for the creation of the company is the fact that music videos and live performances can still impact the artist's career in a really positive manner, and a great example is Beyoncé's "Homecoming" Netflix documentary that was made because of her successful live show at the Coachella festival in the US. As Doc McGhee said in Marks and Tannenbaum's 'I want my MTV' book (2011, p.282), "you never get what you deserve, you get what you negotiate. I believe a video director was more influential to the success of an artist than the producer of the record. And it's standard to pay royalties to producers, not to video directors". In recent years it has also become more common to release and premiere singles from artists on video sites like YouTube, even whole video-concept albums, like Beyoncé's "Lemonade" album. Big record labels created the VEVO channel, where many different artists from various labels can post their music videos, benefiting from a platform with millions of viewers, ensuring a steady income stream from the videos. (Marks and Tannenbaum, 2011; Vernallis, 2013)

Another case is Dua Lipa and her song *New Rules*, which was already enjoying success, but the actual music video was what made it go viral. "To date, "New Rules" has been streamed 539.3 million times in the U.S., 229.5 of them for the video. (Worldwide, the video has been viewed more than one billion times on YouTube.) (Edwards, 2018)" Of course, the more active and consistent an artist's or record label's channel is, the greater the chance of their videos being watched and going viral. A channel should provide not only music videos, but also lyric videos; and videos with just the track and behind-the-scenes footage also count as valid and consistent content. (Edwards, 2018)

2.1.4. Who works at the company

The company will initially consist of a team of two or three people, where one person (the author) will be in charge of (co-)production and project management. The other (two) staff member(s) will be working mostly behind the scenes, dealing with administration, finance, client requests and connecting the different creative professionals to each project (who will be hired as agency staff on a project basis). As the company grows and expands throughout the years, more people will be hired and added to the core team to take over some of the

responsibilities and deal with more clients in order to ensure that every project is handled with equal attention and professionalism.

2.1.5. How the company operates

Initially, the company will work with music students, emerging artists and smaller independent record labels in London, using their network, promoting themselves around the city in places such as the Tileyard community, Soundskool, Nottingham Trent University, and universities related to the entertainment industry such as the University of the Arts London and dance colleges, as well as being active on social media with an Instagram and Facebook account to start with. An example of how the company will operate in the early stages is by reaching out to third year bachelor and master students (who have a bit more experience and are looking to add projects to their portfolio) from the University of the Arts London (UAL) from the film and screen, photography and acting courses to collaborate on projects. By doing this, the company will be able to find a young and enthusiastic team of people, save costs by paying a fraction of the price of an established professional, while providing these students with experience, contacts and the opportunity to add content to their portfolios.

Meetings with clients will be held at a flexible work space in London, which will be the only physical fixed cost generator at the start. Apart from the links to other creative professionals, the company itself offers a production service, where the company comes up with the creative concept of a video, or co-creates it with the client. If this service is not required due to the client already having a concept, the company will manage and supervise the entire project from beginning to end, acting more as a consultant if so required. If the project includes dancing to a choreography, the company will post the client's project and requirements on websites such as www.mandy.com, www.starnow.com and www.backstage.com. Here, dancers, choreographers and other creative professionals will be able to apply for the job. The company will then check that these potential employees are a good fit for the projects, potentially holding an audition so that the client can select its own team. Alternatively, film crew, editors, photographers, designers and others will also be headhunted and recruited from sites such as www.radarmusicvideos.com and www.creative-commission.com. Through meeting and working with many different people within the entertainment industry, SCV will slowly build up its very own roster of creative professionals, who it will be able to contact directly and hire for future projects, adding them to its creative community roster. All of the websites mentioned above are a great way of posting the roles required for a music video or live performance, as well as quickly and effectively finding the necessary elements for the project. (Backstage, 2019; Creative Commission, 2019; Mandy, 2019; Radar Music Videos, 2019; Starnow, 2019)

Once the company has been running for a longer period of time, it will hopefully attract bigger clients with larger budgets, which might allow them to collaborate with “amckdance”, who represent dancers, creative directors, choreographers and models in Europe. AMCK Dance has provided dancers for live performances for Little Mix and Zara Larsson as well as for dance scenes in the 2019 Aladdin movie, just to name a few examples. Bigger clients also tend to be more attractive for companies offering product placement opportunities, which can make a big difference in a client’s budget. Product placement is a practice that is sometimes used for artists’ music videos: it involves the artist using or showing a company’s product or service in their music video, as an extra form of promotion. This way, the artist gets paid for promoting the product and the company’s product or service effectively reaches a specific target market. The amount of money that the artist receives can vary from smaller amounts of around £4,000-£8,000 if the artist is not so well known, yet really likes the product/brand and actually wants to incorporate it into the video; to £15K-35K for popular artists; to £55-125K for superstars, all depending on who the artist is and how the product is shown in the video. As an example, Ella Mai’s video “Boo’d Up” would not have been the same without the financial help of Lyft’s product placement in her music video. At the same time, product placement can also be a downfall, especially when the product does not match the video aesthetic or the values of the artist or record label, damaging the artist’s credibility. (AMCK Dance, 2019; Edwards, 2018)

SCV plans to hire rehearsal space in dance studios across London, such as Base Dance Studios, Gymbox studios and/or community centre studios, which should not cost much more than 45 pounds an hour. Alternative rehearsal studios can also be found on the Rehearsal Space Finder website. The company will be in charge of hiring studios for the choreographers, dancers and potentially the artist (to hold auditions and to rehearse a choreography). As for the location for music video shoots, it can be kept free of charge by shooting in a park, an abandoned property, the beach or somewhere similar, or simply low budget by looking for locations on apps and websites such as Scouty and UKFilmLocation, where a location can be hired for a certain price per hour (which can vary from 30 to over 1000 pounds an hour). (Rehearsal Space Finder, 2019; Scouty, 2019; UK Film Location, 2019)

The cheapest way to find people to work on a project is probably to reach out to those who do not dance/film/edit full-time, but as a hobby at a good amateur level. Most likely, the emerging artist will not have a large budget to spend on a music video or dancers. Talking from personal experience, the author (who also dances) helped with the beat maker duo ELEVNS’ marketing plan by creating a one-minute choreography to their new single “Summer Vibe”. She did this for free as a creative challenge, helping their marketing strategy

by creating more content to support their music on social media. (This is the link to the video <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1vTLqVcxP0s1tTysdKOxUYhF1CxOzcHtf>)

As an emerging artist with a smaller budget, sacrifices sometimes have to be made. If the artist has an idea for a video with an army of dancers at an extremely expensive location, chances are that the artist will have to make do with a different location and less dancers. People are more likely to work with you if they receive a decent amount and feel valued. If there is less going on in a video it is not necessarily less interesting: it can be simple but captivating. One example is Sabrina Claudio's music video for "Stand Still" <https://youtu.be/dw0SjXiU4IE>, which is beautifully filmed, but takes place in one simple room, working with just one choreographer/ movement coach. No other dancers are featured in the video, so costs are kept at a minimum with only Sabrina dancing and moving around in the room.

To give a rough idea on how a project would be handled, the first step will be the client reaching out to the company requesting the creation of a project. During a meeting the client's requests and budget will be analysed and a detailed concept will be produced (with moodboards, video references, storylines, etc.). Then the right people for the project will have to be found, as well as a location (for videos and rehearsals). If the client approves of the team, further rehearsals and project management will take place (or an audition may be held before continuing). After rehearsals, the final shoot or performance day will come around, along with more supervision and project management by the core team. Lastly, editing will take place in the case of a music video and overall feedback will be given by the client.

2.2. Element 2: Marketing and promotion materials

2.2.1. Mission, vision, values and future goals

The mission embraced by Stroker Creative Visuals is to become a focal point for creative professionals to collaborate and bring the company's (co-)productions to life (always with a focus on diversity and acceptance), a place where artists or companies can request creative performances either for live occasions or for the recording of music videos. This will come about through establishing a large network of professionals in the film, music and dance industry (among others) and connecting them to collaborate on projects. The objective is to meet and surpass our clients' expectations, offering them the best possible service according to their individual budgets.

The company's vision is to inspire and entertain people through the magic of creative performance.

Its values include: an entrepreneurial spirit, being straightforward and open-minded, supplying strength through cultural diversity, respect for and commitment to projects and clients, fulfilling and surpassing client expectation, providing open communication, embracing the art, and creating a supportive work environment. (Mirvis et al., 2010)

Stroker Creative Visual's long-term goals (three to five years) are to gradually attract more established clients with larger budgets, while retaining and assisting its current smaller clients in their growth. The aim is to nurture a loyal and long-term relationship with the clients, as well as to become a reference point for the industry's choreographed creative projects. Once there is enough relevant footage and content, a YouTube channel might be created to share this and reach even more people online. Another goal is to grow the follower base on social media, striving for at least a thousand followers on Instagram (and half of that on Facebook) within the first year, and then at least tripling that number the next year, targeting the potential target market.

2.2.2. External and internal analysis

To better understand the company's surroundings and the market in which it operates, both internal and external factors need to be analysed. The external factors are uncontrollable factors that form part of the macro environment and will be studied in a PESTLE analysis. This analysis covers the political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental aspects of a market. It can assist in detecting and preventing problems, as well as seizing opportunities in the market, and potentially adapting processes and services as new information becomes available. (Yüksel, 2012)

The political and legal aspects revolve around the unknown outcome of Brexit, as the uncertainty involved could diminish the chances of collaborating with a potential international sponsor or investor to obtain funding. At the same time, more national companies would be needed to support the UK entertainment market; however, government instability has a negative effect on businesses. Copyright laws are becoming stricter, with copyright infringement on the Internet now much more likely to be detected. Due to this uncertain political scene, the economy is also suffering, slowing down the UK economy in general, and causing multinationals to leave the country. Social factors include society's most common way of consuming music: i.e. listening to music on music or video streaming platforms on demand and on any device. People will continue to support the music industry as entertainment and an escape from reality. At the same time, it is harder to get people to buy

music-related products as they can stream almost anything. Nowadays, it is all about the strategy behind the project that will eventually lead to sales in the form of concert tickets, merchandise and exclusive vinyls. Technological factors include the use of the Internet, especially social media and streaming platforms, to discover and share new music. People are constantly ready to consume online content, even multitasking while on their phones or laptops, listening to music and scrolling through an artist's Instagram account. As this content is available online, it can reach wider and more international audiences, engaging with more potential customers all over the world. Although the environmental factors are not necessarily highly relevant to this market, they could be used to the company's advantage by working with topics dealing with the environment and sustainability, and promoting these in concept videos and social media. (Yüksel, 2012)

To further the research for the company's market, a SWOT analysis has been performed to identify its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This analysis is partly internal (strengths and weaknesses referring to the company itself) and partly external (referring to the market in which it operates). (Kotler et al., 2019; Pickton and Wright, 1998)

See 5.4. Appendix 4 for full SWOT Analysis

2.2.3. Target market and competitor analysis

The market in which the company will be operating is the UK entertainment industry (with a focus on music and dance); more specifically, within the service market. SCV will be operating in an emerging sector, a new type of business made possible by the online world (Internet, social media, industry platforms and video streaming websites) and a demand for more visual content linked to music, as a way of rejuvenating a mature industry that runs its business in a more traditional manner. Current trends must be taken into account and watched at all times, in order to keep up with competitors and maintain the target market's attention. (Kotler et al., 2019)

The main target group for the B2B (business to business) services are singers, musicians, and record labels (initially smaller clients, with more established ones later on) who are looking to develop a choreographed creative performance project in the UK. During the first year of operation, the company will most likely concentrate on emerging artists, students and smaller independent record labels until it builds up a solid reputation; then it will target more established artists and labels, with larger budgets and more extensive connections. The target market for B2C (business to consumer), who will be consuming the actual final product, consists of the fans of the artist or band, people who are active on social media and video sharing platforms (most likely, younger audiences searching for choreographed

videos), with a particular interest in music and dance, as well as concert and festival attendees who can appreciate choreographed performance. As for market segmentation, music genres best known for including music videos are pop, R&B and “singer-songwriter style”: their audiences can generally also be found online on YouTube, looking up the music or lyric videos of a song. Despite the target audience having now been identified, it remains very broad, probably due to the company still being only hypothetical, without any actual business. Once the company starts working with clients and sees results, it will be able to analyse the type of clients it attracts, and discover who engages with the content (e.g., by using Google Analytics and conducting surveys). SCV’s marketing mix will need to attract the target market in order to be profitable and gain customer interest and loyalty. The marketing mix (also known as the 4 Ps) includes product, price, promotion and place. The main product is the creation of choreographed music videos and live performances: with additional services including photo shoots and models. There are no fixed price packages, every project will be handled according to the client’s budget and requirements. During the first year, SCV will focus on low-budget productions (between £350-3000) for emerging and independent artists; and as the company expands, budgets will start growing along with the clients. The promotion will consist of a mix of online and offline marketing – mostly online through social media to save costs, but offline face-to-face communication will be key to establishing connections. The final P is place: most business will be conducted online, via e-mails and messages to establish plans and reach out to creative professionals. Then, for the actual rehearsals and shoots, a physical location will be selected according to each project and budget. (Kotler et al., 2019)

The way that the company will engage with its target market is mostly through online platforms. Historically, music videos have migrated from TV to the Internet, following in the footsteps of modern society. Consumers require instant gratification, so if they want to listen to a song or see the music video, they will use their phone, tablet or computer to search for it on Spotify, YouTube or any other similar platform. People are used to the “searchable” and on-demand nature of the Internet, where they can watch, skip and share music videos, or add them to their own playlists. Nowadays, artists have the advantage of not depending on a cable network or specific television channels to air their music video, they can use the Internet and post on their websites and platforms like YouTube, where people can easily find their video by typing in their name. YouTube as a platform is especially interesting for artists and labels, as music videos (and related content, such as behind the scenes footage) are one of the most popular, most viewed and most discussed type of video online. (Edmond, 2014)

Now, when talking strictly about the online video streaming market, YouTube's share is 18%, with competitors Netflix at 40% and Hulu at 14%. Linking this information back to artists, music videos that are posted on YouTube are exposed to millions of people, just a click away from a total of 1.5 billion users and 149 million monthly viewers who use YouTube worldwide. As YouTube recommends other videos to consumers subsequent to their viewing a (music) video, releasing content on that platform is especially attractive to artists. This could help with viewer engagement, making it easy for them to find more content from the artist and potentially even interesting them enough to look for their music on Spotify and later purchase concert tickets for live events. YouTube gives smaller artists and labels the opportunity to actually post and share content on a platform that can reach a large audience, even without the marketing and promotion budgets of major labels. "The lowered entry barriers that result from Internet delivery enable artists and intermediaries to undertake distribution and marketing activities more cheaply" (Fox, 2004, p. 205). (Dogtiev, 2019; Fox, 2004; Scott Hiller, 2016)

As mentioned earlier, not many competitors offer exactly the same services as Stroker Creative Visuals. Websites such as Starnow, Mandy, Creative Commission and Radar Music Videos permit models, dancers, videographers, editors and others to sign up and then respond to online briefs from people who are looking to collaborate on a creative project. Then there are agencies like AMCK Dance and Simon & How Associates, that provide dancers, choreographers and models for more professional projects. Then there are companies that focus solely on video production or choreographies for shows. However, there is not really one central point available to an artist that will plan everything and supply a music video or live performance that really focuses on the choreographed element. The only other company that is slightly similar is Blackstar London, which is a boutique creative and marketing agency for the music industry specialising in artist campaigns. Furthermore, they supply campaign management, social management, digital marketing and creative direction. This last service includes the commissioning of music videos, photo shoots and more, which is similar to what SCV offers (although SCV focuses specifically on the choreographed element).

2.2.4. Offline marketing

Although we live in a world where most things seem to be happening online, the offline world is equally important. Establishing relationships face-to-face is vital, showing people the personal side of your company is what makes it more human and relatable. It will be crucial for Stroker Creative Visuals to attend entertainment industry networking events as well as young entrepreneur events and panels (many can be found on Facebook and Eventbrite),

especially during the first year, in order to establish connections with potential clients and to pitch its business plan. People will be more likely to remember your company if they have had a conversation with you and can put a face to your name. Printing out business cards with your details and handing them out during these events can be helpful. This gives the potential client something tangible to hold on to, while providing your contact details and website. Being proactive and reaching out to industry professionals is also essential. In the early stages of existence, Stroker Creative Visuals will be actively approaching entertainment agency websites, companies such as Blackstar London, and individual dance, music and film professionals to plan meetings. These meetings will often consist of simply talking about the industry and learning from other approaches and experiences; however, they might also cover the possibilities of collaborating on projects.

Once the company has worked on a few projects and gained some experience, it may well reach out to Tileyard Education and teach a guest lecture at one of the master courses. This will put SCV on the student's radar and show them the possibilities of working in the music industry, potentially offering an internship that would benefit both student and company. If this is successful, SCV will consider giving more guest lectures at different universities related to the entertainment business.

2.2.5. Online marketing

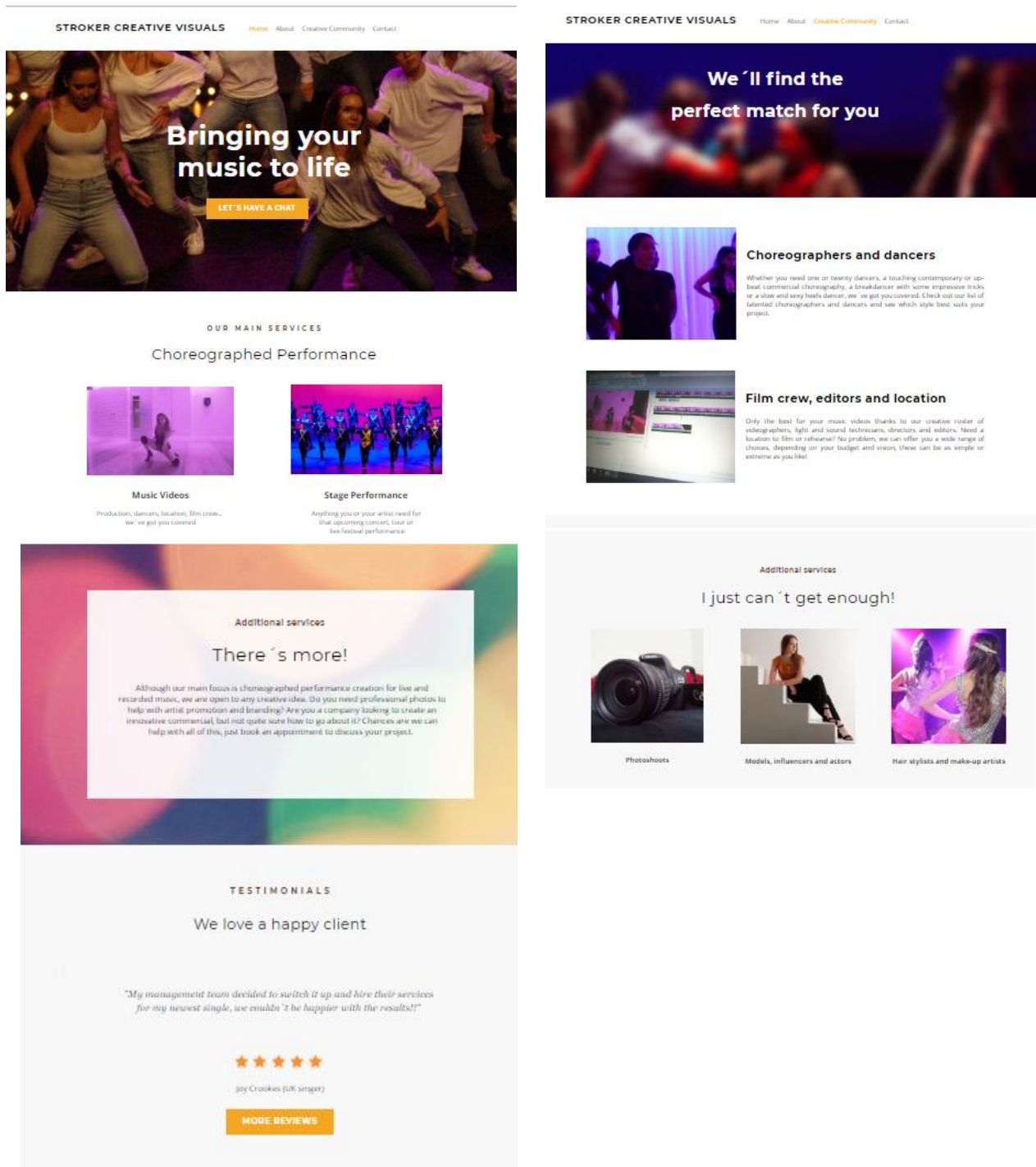
Social media is a key factor for SCV, especially in the first year of existence, as the initial marketing budget will be limited – online marketing can often be either very cheap or completely free. This will continue to play a major role throughout the company's lifetime, maintaining that interest of and engagement with the audience. Companies use social media for advertising and exposure purposes, connecting with potential clients online, sharing posts re promotions, building customer relationships and reaching out to an international audience. Companies can build and shape their brand image on the Internet, cementing their followers' trust by being more accessible and personal. Social media makes it easier than ever to reach out to people and network on a more informal level, while also providing a key platform for many people to discover new music and share song recommendations with their followers. Online reviews and opinions about artists and songs on the Internet can also affect the potential music buyer, especially when the opinion is negative. Pop music is the easiest genre of music to find, as it is mainstream and usually shared on all distribution channels. More specific or niche genres are not broadcast to the same extent, but thanks to social media and YouTube, they are now much easier to find than in the past. Social media is also the perfect way for a company to keep an eye on their competitors and watch the strategies that they are implementing, while also being a good platform for small and medium firms that

do not have a large marketing budget. (Dewan and Ramaprasad, 2014; Okazaki and Taylor, 2013; Restrepo, 2013; Wagman and Kopp, 2006; Wikström, 2014)

This being said, SCV will start off with an Instagram and Facebook account, keeping the Facebook account more business-like, posting consistent content that is only related to the company (information about its services, promotional pictures and event and project information). Even though Facebook is not as popular as it used to be (and now appears to be used simply to share memes with friends, or keep up with birthdays, etc.), there are still many users on this platform, and companies are expected to have a profile on Facebook. Keeping this in mind, even if the posts are not very regular, SCV will make sure to keep the company information and “about” page updated, as well as providing links to the website and Instagram account. The Instagram account will combine business-like and more informal yet still consistent content marketing, promoting SCV’s services, sharing stories about projects and experiences, organizing giveaways, featuring Q&As, and creating polls and monthly series such as “female inspiration of the week” and “dancer/music video of the week” in order to keep followers engaged and interested. As budget permits, part of that money will be used to push Instagram and Facebook ads aimed at SCV’s target audience (selecting a group of people from a specific territory, age and interest group), for subsequent analysis of its impact on views, likes, shares and comments with the help of Google Analytics. A LinkedIn account will also be created to engage with the online entertainment industry community, by occasionally participating in group discussions, following industry professionals, inviting connections via e-mail, sharing posts and adding links to other sites and social media platforms.

This outlines the main form of online marketing for the first year. Gradually, other tactics will be incorporated, such as approaching blogs and websites (related to music, dance and entrepreneurship) and sharing the company’s story, as well as holding interviews to be featured on their page. One example is the “The Good Trade” blog, which posts items on women in business, inspiring concept videos, environmental issues and current social topics such as mental health, which really resonates with SCV’s values. Further down the line, radio promotion, podcast features and future influencer marketing will be considered. Radio promotion will start locally and will be selected based on the favourite choices of its target audience. At the same time, Tileyard Education will be approached to discuss the possibilities of SCV being featured on their “At the Yard” podcast, during a “Keeping up with TYE alumni” or “Life of a young music industry entrepreneur” series, to promote and discuss the company reaching a larger audience and gaining more exposure. A website has been created supplying all relevant information about the company. An extra “Testimonials” section was added to the home page, as people often base their decisions on reviews and

Image 1:



ratings from other people's previous experiences. The website is <https://strokercreative.weebly.com/>, and was created as a "preview" of the future official website. As can be seen in "Image 1" (click the website link for more details), the style of the website has been kept very simple, with short pieces of text explaining each section. Some colourful and original pictures have been added to most pages to give the reader a better

idea of what to expect in terms of style and options, and the writing style has been kept informative, yet informal enough for the various target groups. A website is an excellent tool for relevant online presence, adding professionalism to a company and making it easier to be found. All social media accounts should link back to the company website and vice versa. If it is hard to find the company online, potential clients might quickly lose interest and stop searching. A newsletter option has been added to the site to collect e-mail addresses for further e-mail marketing purposes, and to keep people updated. It would be interesting to add a blog section to the (future) website, where more content could be released, promoting the blog on social media and driving more views to the website. Once SCV has been operating for a few years, and has the reputation and network to directly or indirectly approach influencers (mostly for online marketing), influencer marketing will be of interest to the company.

Influencer marketing can be helpful for companies, because people tend to trust other people's opinions on a company above the (personal) opinions and promotion of the company itself. People will be more likely to accept the recommendation of an influencer (person who has a large online following and can potentially influence their audience to buy certain products or services), and will perceive the message as more positive. If they are following that influencer, they usually like the influencer's work and will trust their opinions. (Woods, 2016)

"According to the Global Web Index, users are spending 1.72 hours per day on social platforms, which makes up 28% of all online activity. (...) 74% of consumers relying on social media to influence their purchasing decisions. (...) two-thirds (67%) marketers reported using influencers for content promotion and more than half (59%) reported using influencer marketing tactics for product launches and content creation" (Woods, 2016, pp. 7-8). However, one should not make reckless use of influencer marketing: for example, it would be ethically incorrect for influencers to promote a product in which they do not believe, or that does not work, simply because they are getting paid. Eventually, people will notice this, and will lose trust in the influencer and the promoted brand, hurting both parties. "If caught not disclosing a partnership with an influencer, the repercussions are a \$250,000 fine by the FTC and potentially losing the trust and relationship built with consumers due to misleading them" (Woods, 2016, p. 8).

These influencers could be added to a music video or live performance from the influencer category service – any influencer, ranging from Galen Hooks (famous choreographer in Los Angeles) to Zoella (well-known UK YouTuber). Note that this is an as yet undeveloped idea: however, it is certainly a possibility for the future (and a goal for the next 3-5 years),

especially considering the impact that influencers have on brands, as well as the reach they have through their large online follower base.

2.3. Element 3: Financial plan

Stroker Creative Visuals is a private limited company (Ltd.) based in London. It is likely that the real cost might differ from the expected cost: as the business plan is as yet hypothetical, some details might not be hugely accurate. The financial statements are not entirely complete or accurate (and all numbers are speculative), as nothing can be known for sure until the business actually starts operating and factual financial data can be submitted.

A company deals with different types of costs. At Stroker Creative Visuals, the fixed costs will include the monthly office rent and the core management staff salaries; and the variable costs will include (externally) hired creative professionals, company marketing, location hire, etc., depending on the project. (Kotler et al., 2019)

The company will rely heavily on funding from the Arts Council in London during the first year to carry out the business plan. SCV is eligible for one of their Project Grants (£15,000, of which £5,000 will be channelled into annual music video productions promoting diversity) since the company's activities focus on the music, dance and visual arts disciplines supported by the Arts Council. These concept music videos will be touching on the topics of diversity, body acceptance and mental health to shed light on various important topics in modern society. (Arts Council, 2019)

A total sum of £5,000 will be injected into company operations during the first year and £4,000 during the second and third year from SCV's own savings. SCV is also relying on a start-up loan from the government of £15,000 with a 6% interest rate to be paid back each year. The company takes possible sponsorships into account as well as a potential £15,000 investment from Tileyard London, with the prospect of collaborating and obtaining a mentorship, and potentially selling the company to Tileyard or merging with them after a period of 10-15 years.

The price for a music video production has changed massively throughout the years. Donald S. Passman (2003, p.140) stated in 'All You Need to Know about the Music Business' that "today, it's difficult to make a video of more than garage quality for less than \$50,000 or so, and the majority of new artists spend \$125,000 to \$150,000. Midlevel videos are in the \$250,000 to \$500,000 range, while superstars routinely spend more like \$500,000 to \$750,000, and there are occasional forays that take people into the \$1,000,000 plus range".

To give a few examples, Jeff Ayeroff stated that “‘Every Breath You Take’ probably cost \$75,000 to \$100,000, and we sold over 5 million albums” (Marks and Tannenbaum, 2011, p.122); and when talking about a Michael Jackson music video, Steve Barron once mentioned that “the budget was set at somewhere around \$55,000 for a two-day shoot. Then he had an idea that would have required a choreographer and dancers and another \$5,000” (Marks and Tannenbaum, 2011, p.167).

If we compare the music video costs from nowadays to the 2000s, there is a vast difference in production costs, mostly due to technological advances and increased resource availability due to globalisation. According to the interviewed choreographer, Olivia Lockwood, music videos that she has worked on have ranged between the prices of £3,000-£8,000 for emerging artists and anything over £10,000 for larger projects. And artist manager Mark L. Stein mentioned in a conversation that budgets for a music video lie anywhere between £250-£250,000 nowadays. Callum Watts, director and founder of Blackjack Group, mentioned that he would spend “anywhere between £500-£1,000 for a music video for an emerging artist, as long as it is an edited and final product”. Catarina Pereira, a singer in the UK based metal band Derange, shared her experience with music videos, stating that her band would pay between £500-£3,000 for a music video. One of their higher budget music videos included a dancer who was featured throughout the whole video and they managed to pay her £150 for a one-day shoot. The fees for SCV’s music video and live performance productions will be priced according to the particular client and budget, but will range somewhere between £350-£3,000 during the first years for emerging artists and small labels.

When handling very low-budget projects, the creative team will initially be sourced from websites like StarNow, paying travel costs and meals, or offering the team a flat fee of around £50, while keeping the shoot time as short as possible to make it worth everyone’s time.

The main source of income will stem from the choreographed music video and live performance creations, with the expectation that additional services such as photo shoots, models and stylists will provide a slower but steady secondary income stream. The estimated revenue for 2020 from the main services is £144,000, and from the additional services £72,000, seeing an increase each year. The calculation of the main services revenue for 2020 is based on an average of 15 projects per month, with an average of £800 per project during 12 months. The calculation of the additional services revenue for 2020 is based on an average of 20 service requests per month at an average of £300 per project during 12 months. The client will pay SCV directly for the entire project, with the company administering the fee, paying each employee according to the signed agreements. For exact formulas, please click the link for the Income Statement in 5.7. Appendix 7.

A GoFundMe account will be opened and shared with the public to generate an income to help start up the business. This crowdfunding action is expected to generate £3,000 in the first year, increasing in subsequent years, initially to help build up the new company and later to collect funds for more music videos and content dealing with social topics like diversity. This will possibly lead to future collaboration and sponsorship opportunities with mental health and female empowerment institutions.

The salaries of the core management team have been calculated according to the following breakdown. In 2020, for example, total service revenues are expected to reach £216,000. The £800 fee per project (for main services) will be divided between the dancer(s)/choreographer (£250), videographer and editor (£300), location (£100), and the company (the remaining £150). This £150 is first multiplied by 15 (expected projects per month) and subsequently by 12 (a full year); then the additional services are broken down as follows: assuming that each project costs £300 pounds on average with 20 different service requests each month for a year, around £50 of those £300 will go to the company. Next, assuming that 15 projects involve the company providing the creative concept and managing the project, another £100 per project was added. After adding up total income from the above over the course of a year, the core team is expected to receive around £57,000 in 2020. Location costs and agency employee fees are calculated following a similar formula, multiplying the individual average project fee by the amount of expected monthly projects, and subsequently multiplying the results by twelve (months in a year).

Marketing and promotion costs are calculated assuming that the company spends £100 on Facebook and Instagram sponsored ads during the second half of 2020, £300 on the website, £100 on business cards, £100 on the company logo design, and £500 on the event organisation for the concept video screening (with funding from the Arts Council), coming to a total of £1,600 in costs in 2020. The following years include costs for monthly social media ads, flyers and networking and events ticket expenditure.

There will be losses during the first years, which will slowly decrease in the third year, hopefully reaching a breakeven point after the fifth financial year. These losses are due to major start-up costs and the lack of existing customers. Stroker Creative Visuals will have to prove itself to the industry and slowly build up a loyal customer base, attracting clients with larger budgets in the near future to compensate for the losses.

(Link to [income statement](#) and [balance sheet](#), to see formulas).

2.4. Element 4: Risk Management

After Stroker Creative Visuals has been operational for a good amount of years, it will hire a professional health and safety advisor company for all company projects. During the first few years, SCV will cover this aspect by creating two documents that include a general health and safety policy and a risk assessment with the most common hazards, modifying and adding details to the documents per project. The company will need a general liability insurance (£300-£500 annually) to cover any problems that may arise.

Apart from being qualified and capable of doing their job correctly, all agency workers will need a personal freelancer insurance covering all risks encountered while working. The company will be responsible for correctly briefing the agency workers and indicating their exact role and tasks, as well as mentioning any potential health and safety hazards involved in the job. When creating and managing a creative project, SCV will take responsibility for ensuring that the location is safe and suited to the project's purposes for an on-location rehearsal or shoot: however, it will not be responsible if the location is an established venue – although it would be beneficial for SCV to occasionally carry out spot checks to ensure their worker's safety and understand the work environment. The company will also be responsible for making sure people nearby are not disturbed by project's activities. The agency employee's work agreement should include items dealing with no-show at projects, payment details, any potential risks, health and safety hazards, and job details. (HSE, 2019)

SCV will endeavour to be flexible within reason, if a client gives timely notice of any changes. This will be specified in the contract, as it will result in additional costs. Searching for new options, budget, time investment, cancellation costs, and transportation costs will all have to be taken into account before applying any real changes. A contingency plan will be included in the contract if the location selected is outdoors, specifying the alternatives and the party responsible for potential costs.

Although safety hazards might differ per each project, the main ones are included in the risk assessment in the appendices. The same goes for health and safety risk, although once included in the company's creative community roster, each worker will be required to complete an online health and safety test prior to any bookings. Each employee will receive an e-mail detailing the specific health and safety hazards for each project, and will be officially booked only after SCV receives confirmation of acceptance of all terms and conditions. In the project brief, SCV will also include the experience, qualifications and training necessary for the job, if applicable. (HSE, 2019)

For a more detailed health and safety policy and risk assessment see 5.5. Appendix 5 and 5.6. Appendix 6.

2.5. Element 5: Market research artefacts

2.5.1. Survey

To discover whether people from varying backgrounds were actually interested in the idea of the creative performance company, a survey was conducted via Google Forms asking different questions about this topic. (See 5.1. Appendix 1)

The majority of people chose Spotify (46.8%) and YouTube (33.9%) as their favourite platform to listen to music. Most people would either directly or eventually look for an artist's new music video. The majority of people (71%) considered music videos to be relevant to an artist's career. Music videos are probably the major tool to help develop the artist's brand image. Although it is not much, "online video platforms pay a share of their revenue to record companies in exchange for the use of the clips and music. Revenue is generated from paid downloads via third-party online stores like iTunes, which are often advertised alongside the music videos. And also via online rentals through companies like Netflix; through sponsorship, cross-promotions, product placements (...) through the generation of valuable data about audience and more generally through the cultivation of emotional loyalty" (Edmond, 2014, p. 4).

There are also some arguments against music videos. Music videos are not that profitable, they are mostly for artist and music promotion and exposure. They can make money in the form of a DVD combining multiple music videos from different songs and maybe adding some exclusive behind-the-scenes footage - but no one really buys DVDs anymore these days. Major labels usually decide whether or not a music video is made, thus also controlling the artist's image. However, if an independent artist wants to create a music video, they will have complete creative freedom, but probably a much smaller budget to work with. Other than posting a video clip on YouTube, it does not really get exposure on other platforms, like Instagram. A link to a music video can be posted on social media, but it is not usually shown in its entirety on the artist's or label's account - only snippets or behind the scenes footage). In other words, "the video clip has failed to acquire a significant presence on the social media platforms – Facebook, Instagram and Twitter – which are at the centre of our media landscapes. Algorithms able to identify the music contained in posted clips remain elusive, and the establishment of remuneration systems for holders of musical copyright is far from

complete. (...) it is entirely possible that the traditional video clip, produced by artists to represent and promote their music, will be displaced by user-generated videos that borrow the music of others as their sonic backdrops” (Straw, 2018, p. 2). Even though people still use YouTube to listen to music, younger generations tend to simply use audio streaming services such as Spotify and Apple Music, where music videos cannot be posted. Now if the attention is turned to television - or to what most people watch nowadays: Netflix - a certain seriality can be observed, where a viewer watches the entire season of a particular show, one episode after the other, following a long storyline. Comparing this situation to a music video, the latter does not offer that connection to its audience, it does not last long enough to create a connection with the viewer. (Passman, 2003; Straw, 2018)

In general, people do seem to enjoy watching music videos and commercials with dancers in it. As regards choreographed performances, 43.5% preferred watching a singer/band doing their own thing with dancers performing around them, 38.7% preferred the singer/band joining the dancers in the performance and a few people stated that they prefer watching a performance with a storyline. In other words, there is an audience for artists who make choreographed music videos or performances, which can easily incorporate a storyline. A total of 85.5% of the respondents would consider hiring dancers and choreographers for a music video and/or live performance if they were an artist and 90.3% would be interested in hiring SCV's services if they were a client.

When asked if they preferred choosing from 3 pre-set packages with a fixed price or creating their own package including the services that they deemed necessary (e.g. hiring a film crew, location and choreographer, but bringing in their own dancers and editing the video themselves), 82.3% chose the personalised package option.

The two last questions involved the topic of influencers. We asked if respondents would be more likely to watch a music video if they knew that the choreography had been created by someone like Beyoncé's dance captain or performed by well-known dancers or influencers. In 61.3% of the cases, the answer to that question was “yes”, the rest was “no”. A total of 71% of respondents were interested in a possible “Influencer Category”.

2.5.2. Interview 1: Olivia Lockwood

This interview was conducted with the idea of learning what a music video or live performance creation looked like from a choreographer's perspective, and discovering what goes into it (for the full interview please see 5.2. Appendix 2). Choreographer and dancer Olivia (Liv) Lockwood was interviewed by the author, who is known for her choreographed work for Nina Nesbitt's “Loyal To Me” music video and other artists, as well as for

choreographing live shows for Exim Dance Company and Spindrift Dance Company, among others.

She confirmed that creative professionals usually do have to rely on multiple income streams to make a living, she cannot only live from her choreographed work. She works independently and has not joined any dance agencies and this is what has worked best for her (focusing on healthy long-term relationships). A lot of the projects she works on result from word-of-mouth recommendations from people within her network.

When asked how people find each other to collaborate, she replied that they usually request creatives from agencies that represent dancers, choreographers and models. Other times, the client will hold an open audition, welcoming both agency and non-agency creatives. Word of mouth and network connections are also a typical way of finding people.

With regard to rehearsal space, it is usually the production company that books a studio for the dancers and choreographers. However, at times the client has asked Olivia to find rehearsal space, and although she knows different places around London, this can sometimes be a stressful task when balancing different projects. Therefore, she likes to go to her old university in Roehampton where they often let her have the studio for free. Sometimes the artist is (temporarily) based in a different country, as was Nina Nesbitt, who was on tour in the US when they were working on her music video for "Loyal To Me". They only had five rehearsals in person, but they would send each other videos showing the progress and providing feedback. The amount of rehearsal time for a project can vary greatly, depending on the artist and the project, as well as the shooting hours for a music video. At times, filming an entire video, if it is not heavily dance-focused, can be as short as 3-4 hours; at others, it can take a number of days.

Depending on the project, at times Olivia both choreographs and directs the production (getting involved in the overall process), and other she just sticks to the choreography. Sometimes the directors trust her choice of dancers, and sometimes they hold their own auditions. The only other company similar to Stroker Creative Visuals that Olivia could think of was Blackstar London, with which she has worked with on several occasions for artist music videos: she recalled the company organising everything around the video and selecting all relevant parties for the client.

Personally, she has never worked with percentages, always charging a flat fee or a day rate. In her opinion, dancers should never get anything less than 240-250 pounds for a show (per day). As a choreographer she never goes any lower than 400 pounds for a shoot day (half of it for a rehearsal day), but tends to ask anywhere between 800-1000 pounds.

In her opinion, Stroker Creative Visuals could be an attractive prospect for many different people, such as emerging artists, London fashion week (who are always looking for dancers), art galleries and community projects. SCV could also be a good platform for established dancers who are looking to branch out into choreography and prove themselves in that area.

Lastly, even though she was not hugely aware of the online influencer market, she did mention an choreographer based in the USA, Parris Goebel, who has been frequently requested by artists ever since she choreographed Ciara's "Level Up" music video.

2.5.3 Interview 2: Justin Argent

A short 10-question interview was conducted with event security advisor Justin Argent, in order to discover more about the health and safety and risk assessment aspect with regard to the company. Since Stroker Creative Visuals combines concept production with agency work, clear rules need to be established regarding responsibilities in order to avoid problems in the future. According to Justin, the company's responsibility is to make sure the agency employee receives all information in advance regarding the job involved, including all possible safety hazards or danger. Clear agreements prevent possible confusion if an (undesirable) scenario takes place. That way, everyone is aware of their own responsibility.

Since the company will handle different projects each time, a new risk assessment and health and safety policy will have to be made for each case, updating the general sheets with new information and new safety hazards. All agency employees would have to follow and complete a basic health and safety online training before joining the company or working on their first project. It will be done online as the company does not own a physical building: and this way, employees can complete the training in their own time.

Clients should be made aware of the costs of making last-minute changes to projects, and the possibility of actually being able to fulfill those new requirements. The company requires clear instructions from day one to avoid confusion and wasting time and money.

For the full interview please read 5.3. Appendix 3.

3. REFLECTIVE ANALYSIS

My goal in this master thesis was to learn more about the music and entertainment industry and create a viable business plan for a company that could potentially operate within this industry. I carried out a lot of research beforehand, gathering all sorts of information from industry literature, scientific articles on Google scholar, lectures, websites, blogs and more, learning about different points of view, possibilities and business plans that have or have not worked in the past. Besides secondary research, primary research also played a part in this dissertation, aided by various interviews and a questionnaire with a total of 62 respondents.

I analysed a number of subjects for the purposes of this thesis, among which the live music industry and the possibility of the performance element; the relevance of an online brand image for artists and YouTube for music videos; influencer marketing; the impact of social media; and the transition from TV to online content. Also, I performed various analyses to gain more in-depth knowledge of the company and its surroundings: these included the competitor and target market analysis, the company's external and internal analysis, and a risk assessment along with a health and safety policy. Due to the Internet boom, contemporary artists need to cultivate their online image as well as promote their music. Nowadays, people expect visual content of an artist or band along with their music, in the form of a music video, live performance show or promotional pictures. The image projected on the Internet and social media can greatly influence the way the public views an artist. A strong and consistent brand image can help an audience understand what the artist is about, which will enable them to identify with him/her. (Dewan and Ramaprasad, 2014; Yüksel, 2012)

I relied on visual and auditory learning styles for my research for this dissertation. Visual learning consisted of reading books and articles, as well as evaluating various charts and diagrams about the subjects studied. I needed to really delve into the subject in order to gain knowledge and find the relevant core information. Auditory learning consisted of viewing informational YouTube videos featuring experts, attending lectures, conducting telephone calls with tutors, and meeting one-on-one with industry experts, which helped me gain more insight into the studied topics from people involved in the daily business. (Business Balls, 2019)

During the course of my third term at Tileyard Education, I had monthly meetings with my tutor, Richard Engler, who is a partner at Autonomy Music Group in London. These meetings usually lasted about 45-60 minutes and were held either in his office or in the Vinyl Café at Tileyard. Although the first three meetings (on February 27, March 27 and April 9) were not

related to the final project, we discussed matters such as strategic plans for album releases and entertainment marketing; how to promote an emerging artist with a smaller budget; how to select good venues in which to promote an artist's music; how sync works; and other topics. During the April meeting, we delved into some of the possible topics I could write about in my thesis – in particular, artist management, as Richard advised me to talk about a topic that could be useful for future work possibilities and this was one of the job directions in which I was interested.

On May 29 we had another meeting, and this time we discussed my ideas for my thesis, which included the original idea of this business plan. Initially, I had envisioned this company as a physical building with office space and a number of studios where rehearsals could take place, as well as video and photo shoots. I had planned on renting out these spaces to the public when not in use, in order to generate another income stream for the company. However, Richard advised me to keep the costs as low as possible, especially since the business was going to be a start-up, so we adjusted the idea into an online-based company in order to eliminate major costs. We talked about the future USP, and how to source the creative professionals.

After this brainstorming session and with this new information in mind, I started working on the actual concept of the business plan, deciding on my focus and the precise form the services would take, as well as carrying out in-depth research into the live music industry and music video production practices. During this time, I also conducted an online survey to see whether there was a potential market for my business, posing questions to discover what people actually thought about choreographed music video and performances, if they believed these were relevant to an artist's career, and what they thought about influencer marketing. This helped me shape my ideas and identify a potential target market for the company; and some of the answers to the open questions provided me with additional ideas to work on for the project.

My last meeting with Richard took place on July 5, when we mainly discussed my thesis project. We tried to go back to the basics, such as why someone would contact my company for my services and whether there were actually any similar companies currently operating in the same areas. We came to the conclusion that I needed to head out and interview some professionals in order to learn more about real-life experience in the business especially from dancers or choreographers who had actually been involved in similar live performance or music video projects. After showing Richard the website I had been working on, he provided me with some useful feedback on how to make it clearer and more attractive, which I later incorporated into the website. This website was designed to help create an extra asset and

provide a visual idea of what the official website might end up looking like. I tried to keep everything as clear as possible, adding some pictures from my own experiences in dance performances and music videos to give potential viewers an idea of what they can expect from the company's services.

These tutoring sessions with Richard helped me gain insight into the music industry, from small to large-budget projects, from artist management to album releases, and from artist campaigns to marketing budgets for music videos. Thanks to his own experience with smaller companies and start-ups, he was able to give me some helpful advice on how to keep the costs as low as possible, which platforms to use to attract attention, and where to find the people to form a creative team of professionals for the various kinds of projects (especially for music video productions).

At one point during the writing process, I had accumulated so many questions to which I had no real answer, that I felt the need to brainstorm with somebody else. So I arranged a meeting with Amanda Gentle from Tileyard Education to tell her about my idea and question her on a number of topics, some general and others highly specific. I had some doubts about the layout of the project and the precise allocation of the different sections of information that I had gathered. Also, I wanted to question her in greater detail about the marketing and finance parts. Amanda came up with some helpful suggestions on finding funding and sponsorships (mentioning the Arts Council as a possible option for grants), and helped me to define my final unique selling point, as I wanted this to be more specific and "catchy". During this conversation, I realised again how important it was to talk to people who actually had experience with this type of projects. So I reached out to artist manager Mark L. Stein, whom I had been assisting since February this year on a number of projects, and he put me in contact with a choreographer who had previously worked with one of his artists (Sharky).

On July 10, I interviewed the choreographer, Olivia Lockwood, in order to discover what takes place, and who is involved, in the process of creating a music video or live performance. During the interview, it became clear that many people connect with one another through their personal network; and that unless you are with an agency, you usually receive a flat fee for your work as a choreographer or dancer. She confirmed that my business idea was potentially useful, especially as people in the creative industry usually depend on a number of different income streams and are constantly on the lookout for the next project.

As I was especially interested in the financial aspect, she provided me with some details, informing me of the minimum fee she considered acceptable, as well as the usual fee or daily rate she would expect, both for rehearsal and shoot days. She also gave me some

information regarding the budgets of various projects in which she had collaborated so far, providing some insight into the type of people collaborating in these projects and the roles they take on. Olivia mentioned a few competitors, such as AMCK Dance and Simon & How Associates, with which I was already familiar, and also Blackstar London, of which I had never heard: however, she described this company to me as being the most similar to Stroker Creative Visuals that she could think of.

In my thesis, I was expected to include various pieces of original work or supporting artefacts, one of these being a risk assessment. As part of our live music event management module, we had been given a lecture about risk assessment and health and safety measures, so I decided to contact the relevant lecturer with a few questions on this topic. Although I had already created a risk assessment and health and safety policy for one of our previous essays, this was just for a one-off event, not for a company like Stroker Creative Visuals where every project can differ completely. As I was not really clear on how to handle the risk management for SCV, I e-mailed Justin Argent (event safety advisor) for his advice on how to approach this in my company. His response was extremely useful: essentially, he said that I would need to evaluate each project separately, creating a personalised risk assessment and health and safety policy per project, depending on the location, job type and specific safety hazards. He mentioned that since SCV is more an agency type of company, it would be responsible for the employees' safety and for providing them with the details of a job, so that they could make an informed decision: however, the employees would need to organize their own insurance.

If there had been more time to work on this final project, I might have made the decision to conduct another survey with more specific questions and possibly some more interviews with a dancer, videographer and similar company. I did try reaching out to one of the competitors to interview them about their company, but never received an answer to actually set up a meeting. This could have been especially interesting to see how they handle the financial part of the company and learn more about their payment methods and budgets. All in all, I did manage to gather a great deal of information from my own academic research combined with the one-on-one meetings with my tutor, the academic staff and the industry professionals.

Thanks to these meetings and interviews, I managed to learn more about how these creative performance projects work in real life, and how to find and contact the people involved. I was able to see which decisions were made from the artist management side and what was done on the creative side by the choreographer. Being part of the Tileyard community allowed me to use the network I had built up throughout the past academic year to get in touch with

multiple industry professionals and to learn more about how to structure my business plan, and how to develop it into a potentially successful start-up. All of the various lectures in this master's course helped me to build up my understanding of the music industry, combining it with the knowledge of international business administration obtained from my previous bachelor's degree at the University of Valencia. The entertainment marketing module reminded me of the marketing theories (SWOT analysis, PESTEL analysis, competitor and target market analysis) that I had studied during the first years of my bachelor's course. Due to the live music event management module, I began to think about topics such as risk assessments and health and safety policies: previously, I would not have thought to include these in a business plan, simply because I had never really learned anything about this. Although our course had included an economics module this year, I still struggled with the financial part of this thesis. However, this was mainly due to the fact that the business plan for Stroker Creative Visuals is merely hypothetical – it has no real financial data as yet to evaluate and with which to work. Moreover, as companies do not usually share their financial data on the Internet, I was not able to find any financial details, income statements or balance sheets of potential competitors, which made it harder for me to create a realistic financial plan for the company (therefore leading to possible inaccuracies in the data provided). (Kotler et al., 2019; Pickton and Wright, 1998)

The overall creation of this thesis was a highly time-consuming process, of which the hardest part was coming up with the actual business idea. Initially, I had planned on presenting a business plan for an artist management or live music event management company; but it was not until I thought of combining dance and music – two of my passions – that I was convinced about the topic for my thesis. It took a lot of research, in-depth thinking and brainstorming with other people in order to figure out the exact “layout” of Stroker Creative Visuals, determining which services I wanted to offer, as well as the company's target market, and its overall operation plans. Once this had been determined, it was all about finding the relevant theoretical information to back up my ideas, interviewing industry professionals and the potential target market, talking to the academic staff and ensuring that the project was structured logically. If I were to perform a SWOT analysis of the process of creating this final project, it would look something like this: the strengths were that I could work on this project full-time for two months straight, my passion for both dance and music, I had experience doing research for large projects and previous business administration knowledge, and I had the network to reach out to relevant people that I wanted to interview. My weaknesses were that I did not really have any substantial experience working in the entertainment industry and therefore had to do a lot of research to see if this business plan actually had a potential market to target, and there was a limit of 12000 words on this project

as well as a time limit, which made it harder to come up with the company's data since it was still a hypothetical company. The opportunities included the extensive network that we had as students at Tileyard, being just one e-mail or phone call away from our next interview; another opportunity was that I could base the whole company online cutting out any excessive and unnecessary costs, and that I could target emerging artists and creatives who might be looking to use the company's services but with lower budgets. An example of a threat would be the pressure from the report deadline or bad time management (for the final project) that might have affected the quality of my work. Another (future) threat is the experience from competitors like AMCK Dance and Blackstar London, who might overshadow Stroker Creative Visuals with their reputation and online presence if I ever put this business plan to work. (Kotler et al., 2019)

To conclude, I believe that there is a great deal of potential in this project, as there is definitely a market out there for a company like SCV. Many small and emerging artists in the UK are looking to create more content and to invest in their online brand image (as well as creative professionals or students looking to work on different projects and build up their portfolio). If this plan is ever executed, further details will first have to be determined and elaborated (especially in the finance department): however, all in all, I believe that this project could be potentially very successful and certainly fulfil a niche in the contemporary entertainment industry.

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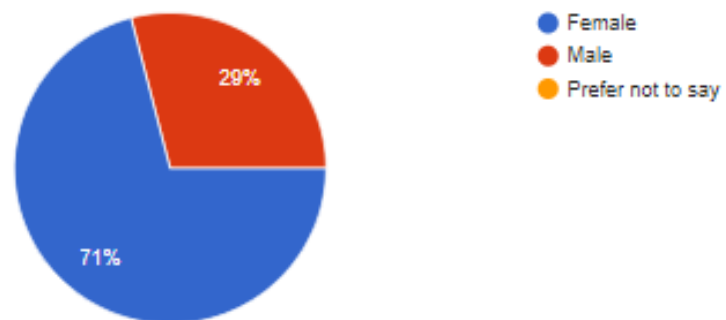
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5. APPENDICES

5.1. Appendix 1: Questionnaire

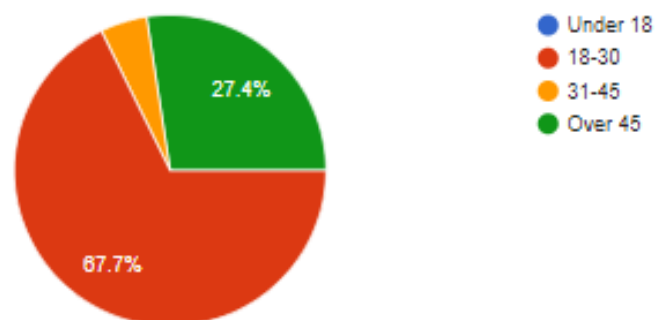
Gender

62 responses



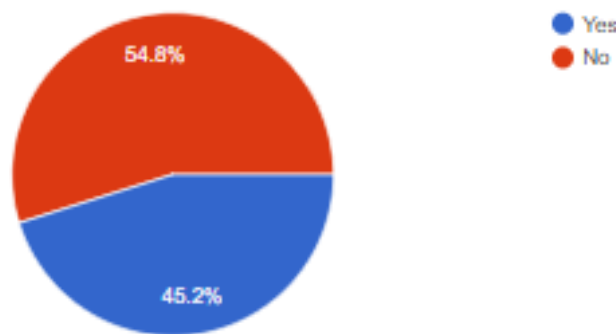
Age

62 responses



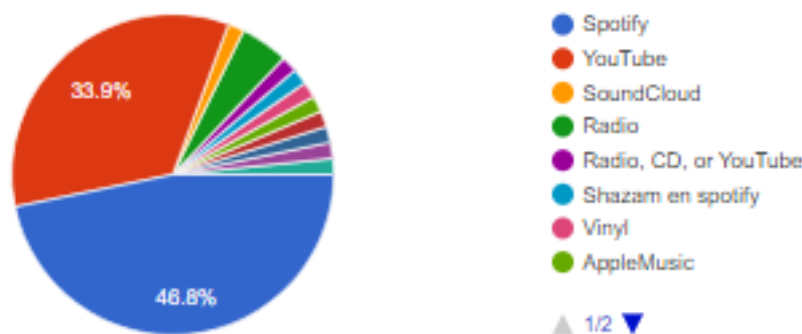
Have you ever worked (or do you plan to work) in the music or entertainment industry?

62 responses



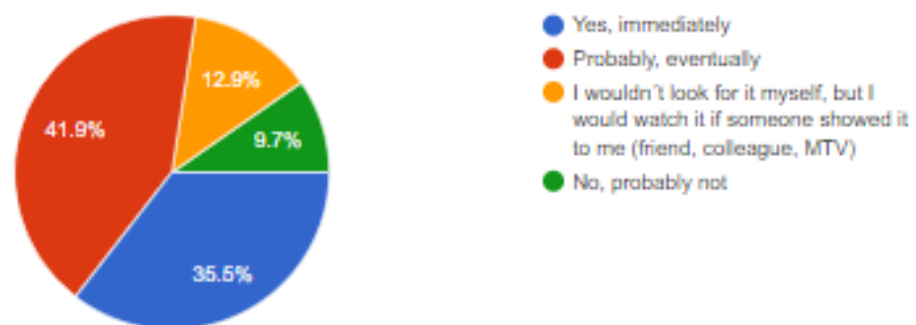
1. What is your favourite platform to listen to and discover music?

62 responses



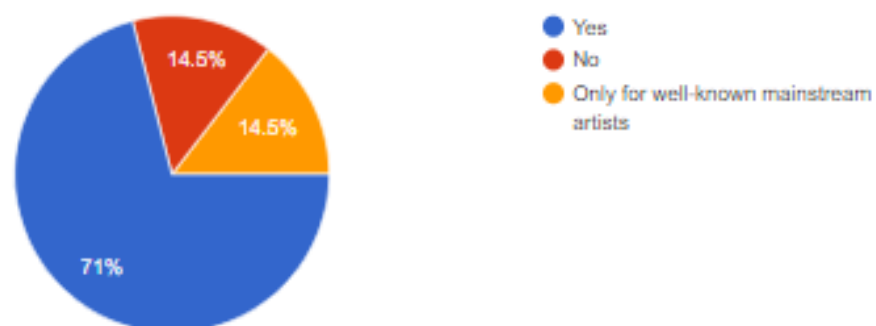
2. If you really liked a particular song or your favourite artist's new single had just been released, would you go to YouTube to look for the music video?

62 responses



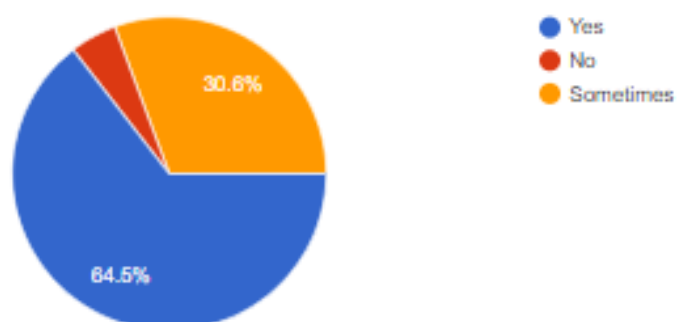
3. Do you think it is important for an artist to have music videos?

62 responses



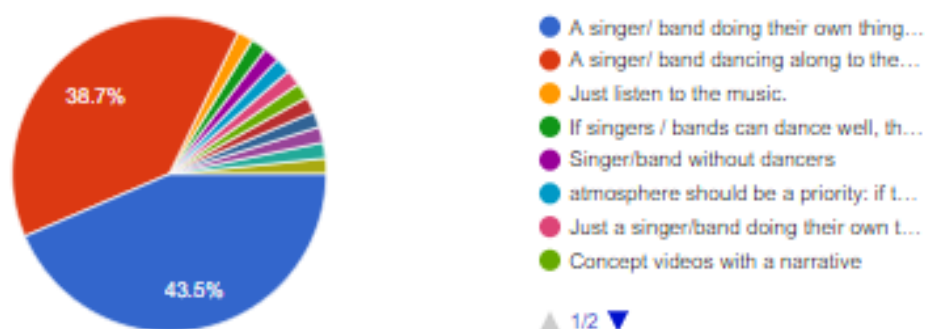
4. Do you enjoy watching music videos (or even commercials) with dancers and/or choreographed elements in it?

62 responses



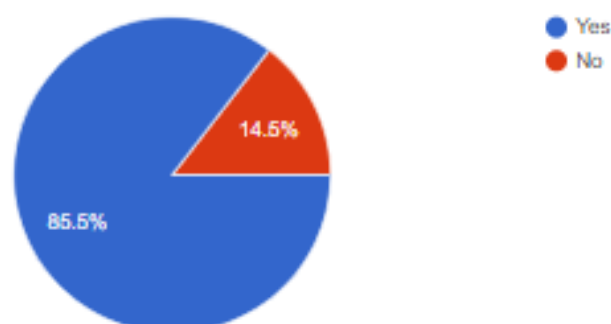
5. What do you prefer to watch?

62 responses



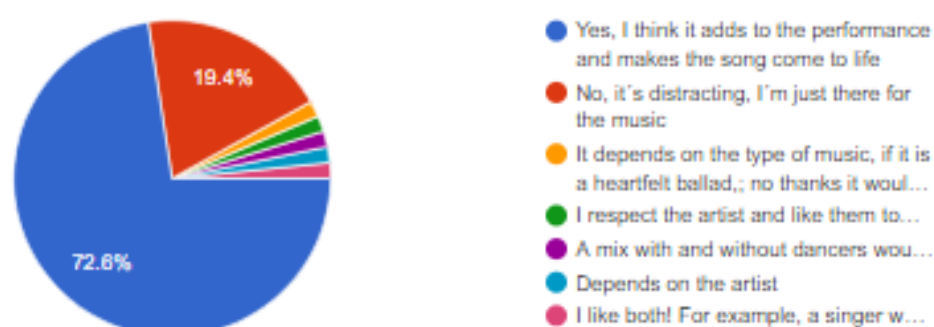
6. If you were an artist, would you consider hiring dancers and/or a choreographer for a music video or live performance?

62 responses



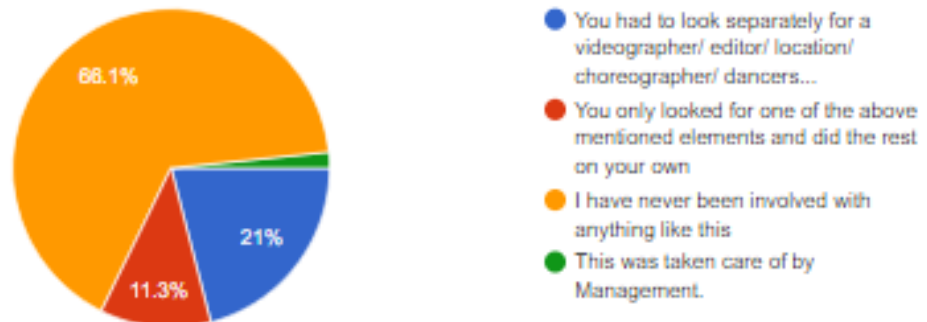
7. Do you enjoy concerts where the singer/ band is supported by dancers?

62 responses



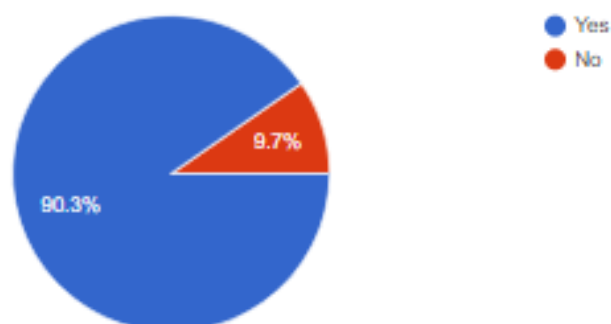
8. If you have ever been involved in making or requesting a music video (or if you have heard from others):

62 responses



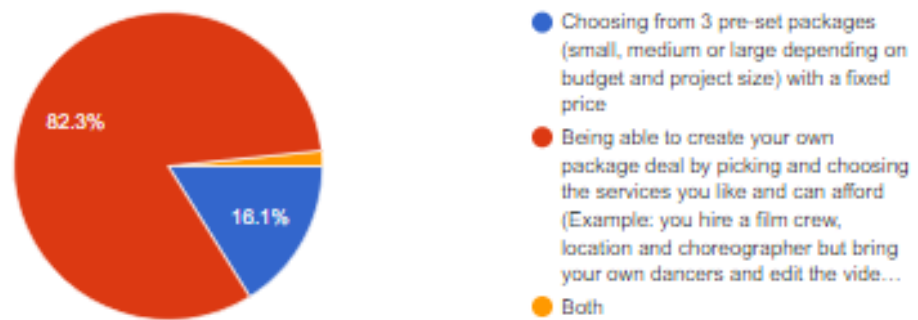
9. If you were an artist/ label/ company interested in making a music video or creative performance and there was a company that provided all the different elements to make it happen, would you be interested in using their services?

62 responses



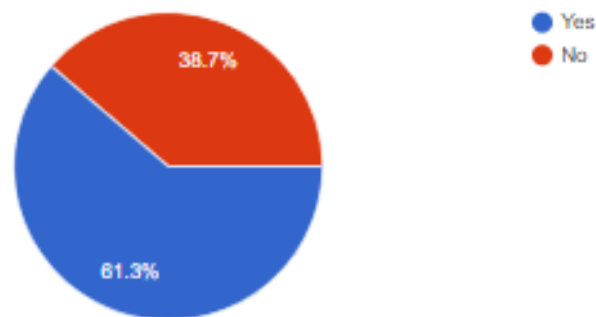
10. If you were to use the company's services, what would you prefer?

62 responses



11. If you knew that the choreography in a music video was made by a famous choreographer (Beyoncé's dance captain for example) or performed by well-known dancers or influencers, would you be more likely to watch the video?

62 responses



12. (If you were an artist) Even if it means spending more money, would you be interested in choosing from an "influencer" category where you could hire dancers/ choreographers who are big on social media to collaborate on your music video or live performance?

62 responses



5.2. Appendix 2: Interview 1- Olivia Lockwood

For full interview click here (audio file):

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1SGtYK-tHKA9-M69jEo-GJ9VaACLoVIW>

1. Do you have a background in dance education or did you roll into it by being involved in the dance community?

I studied at London Contemporary Dance School and then I did my final year at Roehampton University.

2. Do you do this work fulltime? Is it something you can live from or is it more of a passion job that you do part-time? Do you have other income streams in the entertainment industry?

Fulltime in dance but not fulltime choreography. Lots of different aspects, multiple income streams, sometimes lead workshops, sometimes work one on one with artists, movement coaching and direction for the tour (see what the artist feels comfortable doing, giving them improvisation technique, sometimes that evolves into choreography. I also teach a bit of yoga, I find there's a lot of value in what it is teaching us what to connect with. Big focus on the breath in yoga, which is really beneficial for artists, and how to connect with their breathing when they dance. Sometimes teach classes, lecture dance technique at dance schools occasionally. I tend to stick to contemporary style, but do train in different styles in studios in London such as Onyx. It helps me find inspiration for my own choreographies and incorporate different elements from diverse styles.

3. If it is fulltime, at what point in your career were you able to depend solely on dance as a job?

It took time but it came to me a lot quicker than I thought it could or would. I graduated in 2012, went into Map Dance Company immediately but then left, and then I took a couple of months off, went to Australia to travel and train. Went back to Devon because of family and money, went back to train at a local dance company, that eventually asked me to teach dance classes, I was one of the choreographers on the bill, they gave me loads of work and they had community projects. Started working on community outreach programmes, young people, assistant lecturing at the same time. Stayed there for 2-3 years to set myself up. Then started creating taking my work out of Devon and eventually to London and eventually moved there. Work is consistent now, but used to be very irregular, I would say it takes about 2-3 years to get to a stable point in this type of career.

4. Do you get asked to work on a project or do you actively go and reach out to people?

There's different ways of doing this, in Devon I was asked to work on a music video but didn't have any experience in that, a local director asked me for this project based on the live work that I'd done (where I'd usually be in charge of directing things such as light and sound). From that point I was really interested in music videos, and started to look at choreographers that were involved in these type of projects, one name kept popping up, Holly Blakey, she actually trained at Roehampton, so I thought I'd e-mail her, she was doing some projects for Florence and the Machine, her style really resonated

with me, it's quite a strange thing to see very contemporary dance in music videos. So she let me do a couple of music videos with her, and after a few I felt confident enough to do this on my own, so I started targeting people. She suggested to move to London and start working with an agent, but I didn't know if that was something that suited me, so I targeted up and coming artists that I really liked, ones who I knew I could contact easily, that didn't have a major label in front of them, so that I could do work that I really loved and collaborate with them. And that is how I got to work with different directors along the way who remembered me and asked me back for different projects or artists who specifically requested me for their projects and then I went from there. Other people go through an agent and they source it for you, and that can also be really successful, but I don't really want to build up a relationship I form with an artist on one project and then have that disappear, I want it to be more long-term, it's kind of a slow process though.

5. How do people find choreographers and dancers to collaborate on their music videos or on stage with them? And vice versa, how do choreographers and dancers find projects to work on?

A lot of choreographers will have an agent, and they have a list of dancers on their books that they will use, companies like amckdance and Simon & How Associates. In some cases, choreographers do hold auditions and accept dancers from anywhere, doesn't matter if they're with the agency or not. I tend to have this small list of people who I trust and just use them for my projects, I have yet to hold an audition. There are various ways, but as I said, it usually goes through an agency. If it's the other way around, an agent will look for jobs and projects, but if you're doing it on your own, build up relationships with directors that you really like. Sometimes it's luck, but use your network, reach out to people, just ask and show a real interest. Sometimes the producer will pitch a choreographer to a director, but that doesn't necessarily guarantee that you'll get the job. If you're a smaller name it will be tougher to get noticed and booked at first.

6. Are you ever the dancer and not only the choreographer in projects with singers?

I don't often dance, and that's a personal choice from the beginning, and I've done that a couple of times for live performance, but I feel like I get a clearer picture of what it's looking like if I'm not performing. It's important to step out and be able to see what the director is seeing and be able to give immediate feedback. For me it's never been about me, but about the work. But I do think this might work for other people, absolutely.

7. What's the cheapest way to find dancers for a video, do you only employ professionally trained dancers, do you use students and dance schools?

I can actually talk about this from experience. One of the first artists I worked with didn't really have a budget, and I just wanted to get portfolio work and decent videos. I recently worked on something where a crowd funder was used. I'm always honest about what I think a dancers should be paid as a minimum. When there's other dancers involved that makes it harder, say if they had three dancers, but only 200 pounds. That is not enough money, and then I would have a look and see if it could be done with 2 dancers or one, and then it's just about being flexible. If you have a smaller budget, be flexible and make the project very collaborative, you need to work with your director and choreographer more. Nine times out of ten, they're going to do things for free if you have a good relationship with them, because sometimes they would rather see a good result than just the money coming in. The only dance students I've worked with have been students from London Contemporary Dance School and professional places. If you go somewhere with a smaller dance school the quality might not be what you're looking for. I have friends who are excellent dancers but don't do it fulltime, and in the past

they've agreed to work on things with me, even if the pay wasn't great, because it's just this extra thing for them. Keep in mind that maybe the money won't be there this time, but it might be there the next time, especially if you build up that relationship. There are options like crowd funders, so sometimes it's best to wait a little longer, in order to get better quality and be able to pay the people who are working for you.

8. Where do you rehearse with a team. Who looks for the space and pays for it? What's the best way to find cheap rehearsal space?

Depends on which production company you're working with. Some people are really good, tell you the place, time and date and they just set it up for you. Some production companies have relations with dance studios for rehearsal space. Sometimes they ask about rehearsal space, and I have to look for it, which is sometimes nice but usually really stressful, because I don't always have time to figure that out so I'll just send them loads and loads of links for rehearsal spaces and the prices. I do like having that ability to choose because I have my favourite places where I like to go, I go to Roehampton a lot, easy to get space in the summer (they're really good with me because I used to go there, so I basically go there for free), but if I'm not going there I quite like Studio B in Brixton and that can cost from 22-40 pounds an hour, Islington Arts Factory for 22-30 pounds. But I tend to like spaces that don't have mirrors, because that prepares you for the performance, otherwise you may end up mirror dancing and forgetting the choreo once you have to perform in real life, especially for artists who don't usually dance.

For Nina Nesbitt's video we had a lot of time to prepare, months, because they knew she was going to need a lot of training (she's not a dancer, but wanted to dance in ballet points). We had five rehearsals together and we sent each other videos with showing progress and giving feedback since she was on tour in the US. I had to get her to look technical enough because she was going to be dancing with two professional ballet dancers, and didn't want her to look out of place. She did rise to the expectations we had, the video was actually a great success. Other times, we'll have only like four hours to rehearse with an artist and dancers before shooting. If the video is dance predominant it can take up to twelve hours to shoot (spread over two or three days), if the video only has a few elements it can be shot in about 2-3 hours.

9. Do you think music videos are relevant for emerging artists? To what extent and how can it impact his or her career?

Tough, I would say yes, not for all emerging artists. I think they are important, not always necessary. It works best for pop and R&B music genres. I think that for an artist it's quite powerful to have a visual to be able to link your music to an image. But it's hard to prioritise this as an emerging artist with a limited budget, the money has got to be spread out over marketing, touring, recording... which leaves a small part for music videos. It does really help with artist branding, and social media can work in your favour if it gets noticed and shared.

10. Do you think that music videos can still be successful the way that they are now or do you think the format will have to change, shorter videos, just snippets of the song, so that content can still be posted on social media (especially Instagram)?

The people that have tapped into social media music video footage have used it well, but I still think that there are artists like Michael Jackson whose video are like a piece of art, I think people are always going to want to watch a good choreographed music video, people still want to watch and artists still want to make them. And I think that there are multiple ways to do this, there are people that create 3D and 360 degree view music videos, and virtual reality in music videos is also a possibility (although it

does require a large budget and it's not used that much). When making videos, vertical video does need to be taken into account as well, for Instagram stories and similar, so that's shot independently from the normal video, but that's more for larger budgets.

11. Do you help with the storyline production or do you create a choreography based on what they tell you the song is about and their vision? Are you involved with direction as well?

It really depends, sometimes with videos I've done with Nina Nesbitt, the manager will work very closely with the artist, and she'll want to be there during rehearsals, give feedback and just be very involved overall. Other times, a director will let me get on with it, I'll get a brief, and some video references to get a basic idea of what they are looking for, and then I'll be left to it, send them footage of the progress I'm making with the choreo. If the artist is doing the moves, management usually get more involved and they want to actually see how it goes and be there, especially if they're not dancers.

12. Do you select the dancers that you'll be working with or does the artist/company choose that?

If I've worked with the director before they'll trust me to pick the dancers, but they do want to see headshots before making a decision. Sometimes people do want someone really specific, but I think a diverse cast is very important to promote diversity and acceptance. Usually they will okay whoever I pick, but they always like to check. With an agency they would probably want to see headshots, show reels and credits.

13. Do labels/artists go to one place that can provide all aspects that go into the creation of a creative performance project, or do they go to different companies/ resources to look for choreographers/ dancers/ editors/ camera crew...? If they only go to one place, do you know the name of that company?

I am familiar with one who I think might do that, and they're called Blackstar London, and they are amazing. It's run by Olivia and specialize in digital marketing campaigns, but they brought me in on a lot of projects. When an artist comes in with an idea, they help pull in a director, pull me in as a choreographer, and then the director usually pulls in the rest of the team together and they have quite a big say in it, but I don't know if they do that for all of their clients. It's not necessarily dance focused, but if it's related to a music industry project, they can incorporate dancers and choreographers.

14. Do you know how much it costs to make a music video?

I've heard directors say in the past that they usually spend between three and eight thousand pounds on an emerging artist, and then I think anything else is ten thousand plus, but you'd have to be signed to have that kind of budget. Product placement can give a big boost to a music video in terms of helping out with the budget, but I haven't had any experience with it.

15. What would a contract look like for a dancer on tour?

I would usually charge like a day rate, but if it's a long term project or a tour, I would look at the hours, roughly count them and estimate a fixed price. I would go for a fixed rate, not a percentage. Dancers really shouldn't be getting anything less than 240 pounds (as a day rate) for a show, but that can be a

bit less or more for some people, I would say that anything less than 200 pounds is not so great. Depending on who it is, I usually don't go any lower than 400 pounds for a shoot day (as a choreographer), but I tend to charge anywhere between 800-1000 pounds, but it depends on who you're working with. And this does not include rehearsals, usually for rehearsals I would say it's half of whatever you're asking, so if you're asking 800 pounds for a shoot day, you'd ask 400 pounds for a rehearsal day. And dancers would be the same, whatever they ask for on the shoot day, they'd ask half of it for a rehearsal day, but in some cases dancers get paid a fixed price for the rehearsals (say 400 pounds, and it's spread over two days). But again, it depends on the artist and the agency that you're working with, I can be a more flexible and so can my dancers, because we're not worrying about the agency taking a percentage.

I usually don't have an actual contract with my clients, agency dancers do, but I tend to just agree on the terms, I think it helps because I have a long standing relationships with them, I completely trust them. I will have a little look at what other companies are involved, and check if they are legitimate and then decide if they are trustworthy or not, and nine times out of ten, the production company is very well known. I will agree on my fee, rehearsals, dates, until that is done I don't say I'm on board, and it normally goes through e-mail, so it's all in writing, and then I send my invoice. Some dancers do have to sign a form giving consent to the use of the video. In commercials they have more forms, and they buy out people for the video use, but I don't do commercials (because it hasn't crossed my path yet) so I haven't dealt with that.

16. If you had to choreograph a project for an artist that you really loved, but they could not pay the minimum price that you're asking for, would you still do it?

Yes, yes I would, and I think that many people would, well I'd like to think they do. You know, I still do it now, but I'm very clear, I know it's not going to be x price, but can you meet me at this point, and if it's not I'd have a good think. Sometimes if it's less than half of what I'm expecting I'll just be like no, just because if something else comes in that pays much better I might prefer to do that, but be clear about it, don't leave people hanging. I'd rather not waste their time and be honest, give them an alternative and not mess with their plans later on in the process.

17. How do you deal with difficult clients?

It's usually not the artist, but the management or the label interfering, but I stand my ground in a respectful but clear way. Even if you don't get along with a certain person, you just have to put your differences aside and do what you gotta do because it could mean future work and projects with anyone related to that person. If the difficult/rude person is the director I probably wouldn't go back because you work so closely with them; if it were an artist, which has never happened to me, and usually they are like the loveliest people because they are really appreciative of you.

18. If Stroker Creative Visuals were to get funding from the Arts Council (just to name an example) in exchange for a series of music videos/ performances that touched on the topic of mental health, diversity and body acceptance, who would get paid by who and how much would go into paying the different parties.

If you're receiving funding from the arts council you would have to comply with many different rules, and let external parties go in and do analysis and evaluations. If you first set up a company within the arts industry, you are usually paying everyone but yourself because you want to keep everybody happy and make them feel valued to build up a good network of people, even if it means not really making a profit at the beginning. It does take a few years to go from zero to a decent level where everyone's getting paid a relatively good amount. Crowd funding, charity fundraisers, selling

merchandise during shows, creating a patreon account where people can donate, this all helps to bring more extra money to pay your people and get the projects going. One way to attract sponsors and investors is by writing potential candidates and inviting them to an exclusive show, to show the type of work that comes out of your company and pitching it, doing Q&As.

19. What kind of people do you think would be interested in the company's services and why would they come to me?

I think it could be useful for a number of things, especially things like fashion week, they're always looking for dancers and don't really care about their background, art galleries need people for things sometimes, various community projects... I think it would be of interest to a lot of people, especially emerging artists, because if they don't have a large budget (and can't afford services from places like Blackstar London), they could go to you guys. The convenience of going to one place for everything and not having to contact different companies and people to pull together a team is an advantage. Even if you are an established dancer, if you've been doing live work for a long time but want to switch things up and be a part of a music video, you could attract them with your projects, even if it pays less than what they're used, because that will be more of a passion project for them. Or choreographers that want to get into working on music videos but don't have that experience yet.

20. If this was your company, how would you structure payments, what percentages would go to each participant?

I don't really know about percentages because I'm used to working with day rates or hourly rates, but I do consider how many hours they're gonna be doing, so yes to some degree, maybe percentage based, because if they were doing two eight-hour days but only getting paid 200 pounds, that to me is not fair, so I would think about it that way. If they were doing four hours for one day and eight hours for the other day, maybe yes. But I tend to just do hourly and day rates, and that works for me, and it's the thing that is done, as far as I'm aware, I've seen companies pay dancers flat rates and they don't specify how long rehearsals are, they just state the dates.

21. Do you know of any good blogs or podcasts where the company could promote itself?

One Dance UK is a good website, there are some dance podcasts but I don't tend to listen to them. I'm not very savvy with these things actually, I'm only familiar with music magazines like billboard. Guest lectures at universities that teach entertainment industry related courses explaining what your company does could help spread the word, possibly offering them internships. Speaking on entrepreneur panels would help spread awareness.

22. Do you think a record label would be interested in an influencer category (or someone who is big on social media) to add to a music video or performance? (Think of people with tens of thousands or millions of followers like Jade Chynoweth, Yanis Marshall, Aisha Francis, Matt Steffanina, basically all the famous LA dancers/choreographers and YouTube personalities). How much do you think they'll ask for?

My awareness of this is quite limited but I don't know if the request comes from the artist or the label. I recently read something about the choreographer for Ciara's "Level Up" music video, Parris Goebel from the Royal Dance Family she just got her first gig with Jennifer Lopez (who actually pursued Parris), and many artists have asked for her to choreograph their videos. Labels would be interested because of the influencer's following. I can't see how it would not be a plus, they'll prefer someone like

Yanis Marshall over someone who doesn't have any followers. If it goes viral on the internet, it will be shared on social media and everyone will know your name.

23. What possible risks would you include in a risk assessment, what would the company be responsible for?

I don't really know, usually it's the production company that takes of these things, but I've never had to do anything like this. Sometimes I'll be asked if I have any injuries or illnesses but that's it.

5.3. Appendix 3: Interview 2- Justin Argent

- 1. Since it is more of an agency, is the company (Stroker Creative Visuals) responsible for what happens to the creative professionals and clients during a shoot day for example? To what extent?**

This is a question of responsibility. As an agency, if it is your intention merely to link a production with talent your duty of care is to ensure that the production has correct insurance and risk assessments in place to carry out the shoot safely. Equally you need to ensure any talent you provide has their own freelancer insurance covering the performance work that they are doing and most importantly is competent to do the task being asked of them. This means you need to be sure the brief from the creatives is solid and that the performer understands what they will be doing as well as having some way of assessing if the performer is able to do the job.

An example incident: You are asked to provide “a performer” for a shoot, you provide someone, it emerges they have to balance at height on a pillar, they fall and later claim they were not told of the working at height and would have turned the job down as they have vertigo. Whilst the production carries some of the blame, you could also find yourself liable because you didn’t carry out sufficient investigation before recommending the performer.

You will also need professional indemnity insurance to cover yourselves if someone does get injured and the party in question claims you advised them incorrectly.

If, as your company explanation suggests, your company will lead on some projects, then under the H&S at Work act you would be considered in authority of any site you operate. In the case of a rehearsal in an established venue, then you are operating under the venue procedures and it’s all relatively simple, but for an on location shoot the responsibility for the safety of those working would lay with you, as such you will need to carry out appropriate risk assessments and have the appropriate insurance. You can of course hand that responsibility to another production company but be careful with that as if they fail to carry out the work safely you remain liable if you have not assessed their RAs.

- 2. What happens if a dancer is injured during a rehearsal for a show from one of my clients? Who is responsible for finding a replacement? Would that dancer still get paid for the whole project?**

This 100% depends on the nature of the accident that causes the injury. There is no hard and fast rule for this and it is one that you can write into the contract. I would suggest that as the agency who’s sales pitch is providing talent you want to make it a point you will find any necessary replacements. Consider a “no show” and how you would work to replace them.

The dancer getting paid aspect is a complex one and an insurance issue, realistically it comes down to maintaining a professional relationship with people. You have no obligation to pay people for days they do not work (unless its written into the contract that you will make or they are getting a fixed fee for the whole job rather than a day rate, even then they are in breach). Their/your insurance should pick up the tab for loss of earnings due to injury (which is why it’s critical and ethical to check they have it!).

I have started to mention the word contracts, your business venture, an agency, will live or die on the quality of the contract you have between your talent and you, between you and your clients and internally within your company. Do not underestimate how many people out there will attempt to rip

you off or undermine your previous agreements when relationships fail (which they will). I would suggest that you spend good money on a decent lawyer who has experience of this industry and will help you answer the toughest of questions. An ethically sound agency is fair and engages its workforce with a well organised and effective legal framework that everyone understands from day 1.

3. What happens if the client has agreed to your creative production idea, but changes their mind completely midway and wants a different location, dancers and videographer after the first project was already paid for?

Well this is about you and your business model. Clients do change their minds, a lot, all the time. My company thrives on being 100% flexible and has built itself a reputation for being able to respond quickly to our clients needs. However they pay for it! We are probably the most expensive event consultancy in the UK and likely in the top 10 globally but that's where we sit in the market. Other companies are not as flexible but cost a lot less.

Client management is a huge part of this industry, many clients want everything, for nothing, yesterday. We have to manage the expectation of what is achievable, if Red Bull ring me tomorrow and say they want a venue change for one of their activations then I will send someone out to assess the new space and we will do it, that's because Red Bull pay for that level of service. If a smaller business demands this, I might tell them it's not possible.

Tips:

- Be on top of your budgets. This is easier said than done, when a project is live it's a fluid animal, keeping on top of how much is being spent is critical to project success.
- Sign off briefs and scope of work as early as possible so when changes do come it's clear that these are an extra cost. It's not good having a location agreed but not confirmed with the client as they then will think they have the freedom to change at the drop of hat, if it's not signed off then you will carry that expense.
- Make sure you tell people how much their changes are going to cost them **when they ask for them** so they can make an assessment there and then whether they want to pay for it, chucking it on the invoice at the end of the project will create friction and make it likely you won't get paid.

4. What would be the main general hazards? (would I need to include all the possible hazards for every scenario in the risk assessment? Every project will probably be different, there will be client meetings, music video shoots, photo shoots, rehearsals, auditions, different locations...

You should carry out a risk assessment for every job, as you suggest hazards will be different for every job. Yes there are some that will be consistent, we can assist creating a general RA pack but that's actual work which we would expect to get paid for.

5. Until what point does the company take responsibility for risks and when does it become the creative professional's (agency worker) own responsibility (meaning anyone who is not part of the core management team).

As mentioned previously, this depends to what extent you are managing the show on site. Someone has to own responsibility for the project on site, whoever that is carries the responsibility for h&s

6. How would the agency workers be briefed on health and safety and risks for each project? Would that be in their project-based contract each time they work for the company or what would be a logical way to handle this matter?

You can do a general h&s briefing sheet as part of your contract pack or arrange for a briefing onsite at each project. You can do both. I would suggest that the nature of the variable sites and changing surroundings mean you will need to do this on each job.

7. Would the core management team have to visit each filming location beforehand to ensure their workers' and clients' safety and spot potential safety hazards?

No, if you have given responsibility for safety to another production company. It is still worth doing spot checks and visits to ensure you are putting people into safe environments. We can also do site visits.

8. If the film or rehearsal location is outdoors and the weather conditions don't allow the team to work that day, who takes responsibility and who will have to pay for it? Will the client have to pay extra to have the dancers rehearse somewhere else?

You should plan for this and include contingencies. If that is simply not possible then I would try and write it into the contract with your client that they carry the cost as it is a risk inherit with the brief they have given you.

9. How would you provide correct health and safety training for your agency workers with no physical location? Is it something that can be done online?

You can do online h&s training, this is a good method if you are unlikely to physically meet the individuals. We do produce this for a number of our clients.

10. If someone is working for free or below minimum wage because they agreed to do so, would the company still be responsible for them in the same way they are for the rest of their employees?

Yes, h&s act is very clear on this with the "persons affected by your activities" phrase, for example you are responsible for members of the public in the locality of your shoots as much as you are for the employees.

5.4. Appendix 4: SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
- Company's USP, the one-stop shop for creative performance creation and social advocacy (pushing topics such as diversity, body acceptance and mental health awareness) - Network of creative professionals - Young company, very aware of online trends - More accessible to the general public, accepting smaller projects and adjusting prices - Focus on specialisation in music video and live performance creation, but still offer other additional services to generate more income streams	- The company is a start-up, still gaining experience - Still needs to build up a reputation - Fewer initial financial resources - High production costs for high quality music videos - Needs to build up a loyal customer base
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
- Online exposure and brand image building - Ability to look for and find creative professionals to add to their roster via social media - Dancers and people in the creative field are always looking to take part in a new project and secure another income stream, most of them will be open to join a platform that will offer more projects in the future. - Collaborating with or getting a sponsorship for relevant companies in the music industry	- Existing and established competitors with a good reputation, agencies like amckdance already provide artists and labels with dancers and choreographers. - Excess of information on the Internet, hard to get noticed - Possible economical crisis could affect the company, since record labels could be cutting out or decreasing the music video budget for their artists, making it one of their last priorities.

(Kotler et al., 2019; Partington, 2019; Zi Liu, 2016)

5.5. Appendix 5: Health and Safety Policy

This is the statement of general policy and arrangements for:		
Stroker Creative Visuals Ltd.		
The management team		has responsibility for health and safety according to the terms agreed in each contract
Stroker Creative Visuals		has day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice
Statement of general policy	Responsibility of	Action/Arrangements (What are you going to do?)
Preventing any potential accidents at work as well as illnesses.	Core management team	Perform a risk assessment for each project, indicating how to prevent any problems and how to deal with a situation if it occurs. Alert all employees about any safety hazards they may encounter at the workplace.
Making sure that all employees are qualified and trained for the job they will be performing, giving them the right information and details.	Project manager	Classify the roster of creative professionals into different categories and label them according to their experience, credits, qualifications and more. Inform the employee about the details of the job and make sure they understand the risks involved (if any).
Informing all employees about updated information on health and safety conditions for each project, and listening to any concerns that they might have about this topic.	Management team	Send e-mails ahead of time, before the project starts to give employees time to decide if they want to take the job or not and allowing the company to find replacement in time. Answering e-mails and calls about any concerns employees might have about their safety during work.
Prepare for emergency situations, and having the ability to evacuate people from the site if there is a threat.	Core management team	Inspecting and obtaining all information about the rehearsal or shoot location for each project, noting down possible emergency exits and communicating this in each work agreement.

Providing a safe and healthy work space, making sure any necessary equipment can be used safely.	Project manager	Checking that every location covers the basic necessities such as nearby toilets and supermarkets for food and water. Although it is ultimately the employee's responsibility to take care of any equipment they bring, they have to be informed of any details that would not allow them to use them safely.
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Signed: Stephanie Stroker	<i>S. Stroker</i>	Date:	20/06/2019
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Health and safety law poster is displayed at (location)	Online in the employee web portal
First-aid box is located:	Will be provided at each location
Accident book is located:	Online, in each contract

Accidents and ill health at work reported under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor>

To get an interactive version of this template go to <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/risk-assessment-and-policy-template.doc>

Combined risk assessment and policy template published by the Health and Safety Executive 08/14

5.6. Appendix 6: Risk Assessment

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Likelihood and severity
Slips and trips	Agency workers and clients may injure themselves if they fall over objects or slip.	Booking a location that looks neat, well lit and with no loose cables or objects lying around.	Pay each location a visit or make sure everything is in order before the creative team arrives to work on a project. Have employees look out for each other. Brief the employee about what it is he or she will be doing during the project (i.e. specify if ladders will be used or if the person will have to climb on to something so that they are aware of the risks.	All employees and project manager	Before, during and after the rehearsal/ shoot/ performance	Very likely if no measures are taken but consequences will usually not be too severe
Weather	Employees and clients being affected by bad weather conditions like heavy rainfall, floods or strong winds, which will stop the project from being completed on site. Equipment might be damaged in one of these cases.	Checking the weather forecast to predict when an outdoor project might be possible.	Making a contingency plan in case the weather disrupts the project on the planned day, having an alternative location planned and a set price for the client. Buying insurance to cover this potential problem.	Project managers	Before and during the project	Weather predictions can never be 100% accurate, but the effect of bad weather could cost a lot of money and cause many problems with deadlines.
Fire	The creative team and the clients might be harmed by a possible fire caused by faulty electrical equipment or other.	No damaged equipment will be used during rehearsals or performances. Prohibiting the use of cigarettes on set to prevent any possible fire breakouts. If fire or fireworks are used for a music video, ensure that there is someone around who is trained in handling this.	Spotting the nearest emergency exits and briefing staff members before a project. Running a fire drill for the bigger projects with everyone on set.	Established locations, project manager and agency workers	Before, during and after the rehearsal/ shoot/ performance	If everyone is mindful of what they are doing and their surroundings it is unlikely that something will happen. If a fire does break out, the consequences could be severe if the situation is not handled correctly.

"No show"	The client's project and the company's reputation might be harmed if an employee does not show up for a project.	Specifying in the employees agreement what happens if they do not or cannot show up to work.	Have a contingency plan in place in case someone fails to show up. Have another employee on stand-by if the company suspects someone might not come. Be as flexible as possible with the client, focus on solutions.	Core management team, employees	Before and during the project	It is not likely to happen, but if it does and there is no replacement, the whole project could fall apart.
Last-minute changes in client requirements	The company might not be able to grant the client's wishes anymore due to short notice. Any changes the client has might not be possible due to lack of resources or high costs involved in making the change happen.	Signing agreements on what the project will look like and informing the clients about warning times for changes.	Letting clients know in advance that what they sign in the agreement is going to be the end product and that flexibility will cost them money.	Client and project managers	During the project	It is likely that the client will change their mind. If the wishes are discussed in time, there will be more room for change, but if it is very last-minute, the change will either not be possible anymore or very expensive.
Noise	Agency workers and clients might suffer from hearing damage if exposed to very loud music during an extended period of time.	Set a volume limit during rehearsals and shoot days. Do regular sound checks and provide staff members with ear plugs when necessary.	No further action required for now.	Client and employees	Before and during the project	Damage is not very likely if precaution is being taken, but the consequences could seriously affect the person's hearing health.

5.7. Appendix 7: Financial Statements

Stroker Creative Visuals Ltd.

Balance Sheet

Assets		2020	2021
Current Assets			
Cash	✓	218.000 ✓	579.600
Prepaid expenses		400	400
Short-term investments	✓	18.000 ✓	7.000
<i>Total current assets</i>		236.400	587.000
Fixed (Long-Term) Assets			
Long-term investments			
Property, plant, and equipment (Less accumulated depreciation)			
Intangible assets			
<i>Total fixed assets</i>		-	-
Other Assets			
Deferred income tax			
Other			
<i>Total Other Assets</i>		-	-
Total Assets		236.400	587.000
Liabilities and Owner's Equity			
Current Liabilities			
Accounts payable		28.568	20.248
Short-term loans			
Income taxes payable	✓	2.446 ✓	7.142
Accrued salaries and wages			
Unearned revenue			
Current portion of long-term debt		900	900
<i>Total current liabilities</i>		31.914	28.290
Long-Term Liabilities			
Long-term debt	✓	15.000	14.100
Deferred income tax			
Other			
<i>Total long-term liabilities</i>		15.000	14.100
Owner's Equity			
Owner's investment		5.000	4.000
Retained earnings		-	9.782
Other			
<i>Total owner's equity</i>		5.000	13.782
Total Liabilities and Owner's Equity		51.914	56.172
Common Financial Ratios			
Debt Ratio (Total Liabilities / Total Assets)		0,20	0,07
Current Ratio (Current Assets / Current Liabilities)		7,41	20,75
Working Capital (Current Assets - Current Liabilities)		204.486	558.710
Assets-to-Equity Ratio (Total Assets / Owner's Equity)		47,28	42,59
Debt-to-Equity Ratio (Total Liabilities / Owner's Equity)		9,38	3,08

Income Statement	2020	2021	2022
REVENUE			
Services			
Main Services (Music Video + Live Performance Creation)	£ 144.000	£ 450.000	£ 600.000
Additional Services	£ 72.000	£ 126.000	£ 147.000
Total Services	£ 216.000	£ 576.000	£ 747.000
Other			
Owner Investment/ Company Capital	£ 5.000	£ 4.000	£ 4.000
Merchandise	£ 2.000	£ 3.600	£ 4.800
Start Up Loan	£ 15.000		
Arts Council Funding	£ 15.000	£ -	£ -
Crowdfunding	£ 3.000	€ 5.000	€ 5.500
Sponsorships/ Investment	£ -	£ 2.000	£ 18.000
Total Other	£ 40.000	£ 14.600	£ 32.300
TOTAL REVENUE	£ 256.000	£ 590.600	£ 779.300
EXPENSES			
Direct Costs			
Merchandise	£ 700	£ 840	£ 1.050
Locations	£ 18.000	£ 56.250	£ 75.000
Salary (Core Management Team)	£ 57.000	£ 122.400	£ 157.050
Agency Employees Wages	£ 159.000	£ 435.600	£ 559.950
Annual Concept Videos for Arts Council	£ 5.000	£ 5.000	£ 5.000
Total Direct Costs	£ 239.700	£ 620.090	£ 798.050
General and Administration (G&A)			
Marketing and Promotion	£ 1.600	£ 3.300	£ 3.850
Loan Interest Rate (6%)	£ 900	£ 900	£ 900
Fee for Company Name Registration	£ 12	£ -	£ -
Insurance	£ 400	£ 400	£ 400
Office Rent (Hot Desk)	£ 1.140	£ 1.740	£ 1.740
Telephone and Internet	£ 720	£ 720	£ 720
Total G&A	£ 4.772	£ 7.060	£ 7.610
TOTAL EXPENSES	£ 244.472	£ 627.150	£ 805.660
NET INCOME BEFORE INCOME TAX	£ 11.528	-£ 36.550	-£ 26.360
INCOME TAX (20%)	2305,6	-7310	-5272
NET INCOME	£ 9.222	-£ 29.240	-£ 21.088